

# LEVITICUS

## INTRODUCTION

Many years ago, I read a statement by Dr. S. H. Kellogg saying that he considered the Book of Leviticus the most important book in the Bible. I felt that he must have had his tongue in cheek to make a statement like that. Then I heard a great preacher in Memphis, Tennessee, Dr. Albert C. Dudley, say that he considered the Book of Leviticus the greatest book in the Bible.

Several years ago I made an experiment on our radio program, and actually I didn't know what would happen as I began teaching this book. I wanted to study it and I wanted to see if it was such a great book, and I must confess that I had misgivings as to the value of Leviticus for a popular exposition on the Bible. However, I discovered that it is a thrilling book, and not only that, but I can now honestly say that I consider the Book of Leviticus one of the most important books of the Bible. If it were possible for me to get the message of this book into the hearts of all people who are trying to be religious, all cults and "isms" would end. A knowledge of the Book of Leviticus would accomplish that.

The Book of Leviticus was written by Moses. It is a part of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible.

In the Book of Leviticus, the children of Israel were marking time at Mount Sinai. The book opens and closes at the same geographical spot, Mount Sinai, where God gave the Law. You will remember that Exodus concluded with the construction of the tabernacle according to God's instructions and then the filling of the tabernacle with the glory of the Lord. Leviticus continues by giving the order and rules of worship in the tabernacle. Leviticus is the great book on worship.

The book opens with the Hebrew word Vayick-rah, which means "and He called." God has now moved to the tabernacle and speaks from there; He no longer speaks from Mount Sinai. He calls the people to meet with Him at the tabernacle. He tells them how they are to come and how they are to walk before Him. The exact meaning of the church, the ekklesia, is the "called out ones." We are also those who have been called out. In that day, God spoke from the tabernacle and asked them to come to Him. Today, the Lord Jesus calls us to Himself. He says, "My sheep hear my voice" ([John 10:27](#)). So this book has a wonderful message for us today.

Leviticus is the book of worship. Sacrifice, ceremony, ritual, liturgy, instructions, washings, convocations, holy days, observances, conditions, and warnings crowd this book. All these physical exercises were given to teach spiritual truths. Paul wrote: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" ([1Cor. 10:11](#)). In [1Corinthians 10:6](#) he says, "Now these things were our examples . . .". "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" ([Rom. 15:4](#)).

Peter tells us that the Old Testament holds spiritual truths for us. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you . . ." ([1Pet. 1:10-12](#)). [Hebrews 11:13](#) says, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

Leviticus has some wonderful instruction for us today for it reveals Christ in a most remarkable manner. Tyndale, in his Prologue into the Third Book of Moses, said, "Though sacrifices and ceremonies can be no ground or foundation to build upon -- that is, though we can prove nought with them -- yet when we have once found Christ and his mysteries, then we may borrow figures, that is to say, allegories, similitudes, and examples, to open Christ, and the secrets of God hid in Christ, even unto the quick: and can declare them more lively and sensibly with them than with all the words of the world."

Worship for us today is no longer by ritual or in a specific place. You remember that the people of Israel had been going through ceremonies and they had their rituals, but Jesus said to the woman at the well in Samaria, ". . . Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" ([John 4:21-24](#)).

The keynote to the book is holiness unto Jehovah. The message of the book is twofold:

1. Leviticus teaches that the way to God is by sacrifice. The word atonement occurs 45 times in this book. Atonement means to "cover up." The blood of bulls and goats did not actually take away sin. It covered over sin until Christ came to take away all sins. This is what Paul is referring to in [Romans 3:25](#): "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

The sins that are past are the sins back in the Old Testament. You see, God never accepted the blood of bulls and goats as the final payment for sin, but He required that blood be shed. It was an atonement to cover over the sins until Christ came. In other words, God saved "on credit" in the Old Testament. When Christ came, as the hymn accurately states it, "Jesus paid it all." This is true as far as the past is concerned, and as far as the present is concerned, and as far as the future is concerned.

One of the key verses in Leviticus, dealing with atonement, is found in [Leviticus 17:11](#), "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." The way to God is by sacrifice and without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.

2. Leviticus teaches that the walk with God is by sanctification. The word holiness occurs 87 times in this book. "And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine" ([Lev. 20:26](#)).

God gave strict laws governing the diet, social life, and daily details involving every physical aspect of the lives of His people. These laws have a greater spiritual application to His people today. That is the reason I think we ought to study Leviticus. You see, access to God is secured for the sinner today through the shed blood of Christ. The writer to the Hebrews stated it this way: "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [literally, end of the age] hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" ([Heb. 9:25-26](#)).

Those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ must live a holy life if they are to enjoy and worship God. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" ([Heb. 13:20-21](#)).

Levitcus is a remarkable book, as the contents are considered in the light of the New Testament. This book is about as dull as anything possibly could be to the average Christian and you won't find very many classes or individuals reading and studying the Book of Leviticus. Yet, it is a remarkable book.

1. The five offerings which open this book are clear, crystal-cut cameos of Christ. They depict His hypostatational person in depth and His death in detail (chapters 1 -- 7).
2. The consecration of the priests reveals how shallow and inadequate is our thinking on Christian consecration (chapters 8 -- 10).
3. The diet God provided for His people was sanitary and therapeutic, and contains much spiritual food for our souls (chapter 11).
4. Attention is given to motherhood and is a further example of God's thinking concerning womanhood (chapter 12).
5. The prominence given to leprosy and its treatment, in the heart of this book on worship, demands our attention. Why is there this extended section on leprosy? Those who have been given gracious insights into Scripture have found here a type of sin and its defiling effect on man in his relation to God. The cleansing of the leper finds its fulfillment in the death and resurrection of Christ as typified in a most unusual sacrifice of two birds (chapters 13 -- 15). My friend, if you and I would escape the defilement of sin in this world, we need to know a great deal about the death and resurrection of Christ and the application of it to our lives.
6. The great Day of Atonement is a full-length portrait of the sacrifice of Christ (chapter 16).

7. The importance of the burnt altar in the tabernacle highlights the essential characteristic of the Cross of Christ (chapter 17).
8. The emphasis in this book of instructions concerning seemingly minute details in the daily lives of God's people reveals how God intends the human family to be involved with Him (chapters 18 -- 22). God wants to get involved in your business, in your family life, in your social life. My friend, let us beware lest we shut Him out of our lives.
9. The list of feasts furnishes a prophetic program of God's agenda for all time (chapter 23).
10. The laws governing the land of Palestine furnish an interpretation of its checkered history and an insight into its future prominence. There are a lot of prophecies in this book. The nation Israel and the Promised Land are intertwined and interwoven from here to eternity (chapters 24 -- 27).

There is a relationship in the first three books of the Bible:

- In Genesis we see man ruined.
- In Exodus we see man redeemed.
- In Leviticus we see man worshiping God.

We can also make a comparison and contrast between Exodus and Leviticus. In the Book of Exodus we see the offer of pardon; Leviticus offers purity. In Exodus we have God's approach to man; in Leviticus it is man's approach to God. In Exodus Christ is the Savior; in Leviticus He is the Sanctifier. In Exodus man's guilt is prominent; in Leviticus man's defilement is prominent. In Exodus God speaks out of the mount; in Leviticus He speaks out of the tabernacle. In Exodus man is made nigh to God; in Leviticus man is kept nigh to God.

## Outline

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## **Chapter 1**

**THEME:** The burnt offering; regulations, ritual, and reason for the burnt sacrifice; the law of the burnt sacrifice

This is the oldest offering known to man. It was the offering of Abel, Noah, and Abraham. All the offerings were made on the brazen altar but because the burnt offering was made there, the brazen altar is also called the burnt altar. It received its name from this sacrifice. This offering is recorded first of the five offerings because of its prominence and priority. This offering is a picture of Christ in depth as well as in death. A man cannot probe the full meaning of this offering because it sets before us what God sees in Christ. We can't see as much as He does. Here is a profound mystery that only the Holy Spirit can reveal.

The burnt offering shows the person of Christ. He is our substitute. Paul reveals this in [Ephesians 5:2](#): "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour."

### **Regulations For The Burnt Sacrifice (1:1-4)**

**And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying [[Lev. 1:1](#)].**

God called unto Moses out of the tabernacle. No longer is He speaking from the top of Mount Sinai in thunder and lightning, as when He gave the commandments. Here He calls to Moses from the tabernacle in reconciliation.

"And the LORD called" -- His call is for those who will hear His voice. That is important to see. God is calling to men today to be reconciled to Him. The church is a called-out body, and they are the elect because they are called. "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" ([1Cor. 1:22-24](#)).

"Called" doesn't mean those who only hear; it means those who have heard and responded. I would like to ask you this question: Have you heard Him and have you responded to Him?

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock [[Lev. 1:2](#)].

"If any man" means "whosoever will may come."

If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD [[Lev. 1:3](#)].

"He shall offer it of his own voluntary will." May I say, this is free will with a vengeance. The Lord Jesus said, "If any man thirst, let him come. . ." This is an all-inclusive invitation to the human family. None are excluded except those who exclude themselves. The Lord Jesus gives only one condition, "If any man thirst." You may say, "I don't thirst." Well, then maybe this isn't for you. But if you do thirst, He asks you to come to Him. He can satisfy you. Isaiah included this in his invitation, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters . . ." ([Isa. 55:1](#)). Anyone can come to Christ if he chooses to come. There must be a need and a desire. If you have that, come!

Two types of animals were used for the burnt offering. Animals of the herd are cattle and of the flock are sheep. Wild animals that were animals of prey were excluded. Carnivorous animals were forbidden in all sacrifices. Animals that live by slaying other animals could never reveal Christ, who came to give His life a ransom for many.

A further restriction was that the animal must be a clean animal and it must be domesticated. It could not be taken in the hunt. Only that which was valuable and dear to the owner could be offered because it prefigures Christ. God spared not His own Son. Christ suffered on the Cross, but the Father suffered in heaven. The final restriction reveals that the animal was one that was obedient to man. My, what a picture this is! Christ was the obedient servant. He came to minister and He was obedient unto death.

The burnt offering is the offering that is mentioned up to the time of Leviticus and it was the only offering that was made by those who wanted an approach to God. The burnt sacrifice is called olah in the Hebrew. It means "that which ascends." It is not irreverent to say that the burnt sacrifice went up in smoke. It was wholly consumed on the altar;

nothing remained but the ashes. This reveals that the burnt offering is what God sees in Christ. Paul said in [Ephesians 5:2](#) that Christ gave Himself ". . . an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." Here in [Leviticus 1](#) we find in [verses 9,13](#), and 17 that the sacrifice is "a sweet savour unto the LORD." This is what God sees in Christ. It may not be what you see in Him or what I see in Him. It is what God sees in Him, and that is the thing that is all-important. God is saying that He is satisfied with what Jesus did for your sins and for my sins. God is satisfied that Jesus has paid it all for you and that He can save you to the uttermost if you will put your trust in Him. The question is, "Are you satisfied with that?"

You will notice that it says the sacrifice is to be a male, and that speaks of strength. It speaks of the fact that the Lord Jesus is mighty to save, and that He is able to save to the uttermost ([Heb. 7:25](#)). Then, the sacrifice was to be without blemish which means the animal was to be ideally perfect. This speaks of the perfections of Christ. ". . . In him is no sin" ([1John 3:5](#)). "Who did no sin . . ." ([1Pet. 2:22](#)). ". . . Who knew no sin . . ." ([2Cor. 5:21](#)). "Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners . . ." ([Heb. 7:26](#)). He is the beloved Son of whom the Father could say, ". . . I am well pleased" ([Matt. 3:17](#)).

He shall offer it of his own "voluntary will" is translated "that he may be accepted before Jehovah" in the American Standard Version of 1901. Because of the atoning death of the little animal, the sinner was received by God. The animal had to be offered, not in life, but in death. This was absolutely imperative. It is not the spotless life of Christ and our approval of Him that saves us. Only His death can save the sinner.

In the Gospels we find that when He died, the veil of the temple was torn in two. It was His death which opened the way to God; it was His death which saves the sinner. You see, the veil represents His flesh ([Heb. 10:20](#)). His perfect life shuts us out from God. What God demands is a life that is perfect like the life of Christ, and you and I can't reproduce it. His life is the standard. The Father could say concerning Jesus, ". . . This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" ([Matt. 3:17](#)). You and I just can't measure up to that. The life of Christ therefore cannot save us. It shuts us out from God, just as the veil shut man out from God in the tabernacle. We must have another basis on which we can come to God. That way is through the death of Christ. That is what tore the veil. The minute you and I come through the death of Christ, the way to God is open. It is the death of Christ that saves the sinner.

The offering was to be brought of his own voluntary will. You don't have to come to Christ. But if you want to be saved, then you will have to come to Christ. God has no other way. The Lord Jesus said, ". . . no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" ([John 14:6](#)). You may think that is dogmatic and narrow. I'll tell you something -- it is! But the interesting thing is that it will bring you to God. Now, you don't have to come; that is where your free will enters in. You do not have to come, but, if you want to come to God, then you must come this one way because God has elected that this is the only way! You cannot come to God on the basis of your own "righteousness." He cannot accept your righteousness; He won't have any of it. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us . . ." ([Titus 3:5](#)).

"At the door of the tabernacle" is another imperative. They couldn't offer the sacrifice anywhere else. This was to keep Israel from idolatry. They were prone to lapse into idolatry again and again, and finally their idolatry was the reason for the Babylonian captivity. And this, by the way, has a message for us. It is to keep us from presuming that we can come to God our way, on our terms. We do not make the terms by which we come to God. God makes the terms, my friend. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags . . ." ([Isa. 64:6](#)). God won't accept our righteousness. A great many people think that the righteousness of God is just a projection, on a little higher level, of the righteousness of man. Nothing of the kind! It is altogether holy! The only righteousness which God can accept is the righteousness of God which is through faith in Christ. You can't work for it. You can't buy it. God cannot accept our poor righteousness -- it will simply go down the drain. The offering must be at the door of the tabernacle. Friends, there is no other way to come to God but His way. The Lord Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" ([John 14:6](#)).

[And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him \[Lev. 1:4\].](#)

"He shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering." Dr. Kellogg calls this "an act of designation." This is revealed in [Leviticus 24:14](#) where the witnesses were to lay their hands on the blasphemer before he was stoned to death. Moses laid his hands on Joshua, designating him as his successor. Dr. Kellogg wrote a very fine book on Leviticus, which may be out of print now, but I would suggest you buy one if you can find it in a secondhand bookstore. Here is a quotation from it. He is speaking of the laying on of the hand upon the head of the animal, and he says, "It symbolized a transfer, according to God's merciful provision, of an obligation to suffer for sin, from the offerer to the innocent victim. Henceforth, the victim stood in the offerer's place, and was dealt with accordingly."

In other words, when the man went in and put his hand on the head of the little animal that was to be slain, he was designating this little animal to take his place. The man was confessing that he deserved to die. Friends, when you take Christ as your Savior, you are saying that you are a sinner and that you can't save yourself. You want to turn from your sins and you want to turn to the Savior and you want to live for Him. The little animal was dying a substitutionary death in the place of the offerer. That is what Christ did for us. When you accept Christ, you put your hand on Him; that is, you designate Him as your Savior.

People today seem to have the idea that there is some merit in the act of laying on of hands. They think there is some transfer of power. The only thing that can be transferred by laying on of hands is disease germs. But it does designate someone who is taking your place. When we as church leaders place our hands on a missionary, as the church in Antioch did to Paul and Barnabas, we are designating that one to go out in our place and as our representative.

Christ took our place. This is what it means when it says, ". . . He hath made him to be sin for us . . ." ([2Cor. 5:21](#)) and "Who was delivered for our offences . . ." ([Rom. 4:25](#)).

The Hebrew here means to lay the hand so as to lean heavily upon another. "Thy wrath lieth hard upon me . . ." ([Ps. 88:7](#)). This part of the ceremony speaks of atonement and acceptance through the death of the victim -- "it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him."

We have said before that atonement means to cover, not to remove. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" ([Heb. 10:4](#)). Only the Lamb of God can remove sin.

This offering was done publicly. He went down to the tabernacle, he walked to the side of the altar, and there he slew the little animal. It was a public act. A sinner needs to confess Christ publicly. By faith, we place our hand on Christ, but the public needs to know that we do it. I think this is primarily the meaning of baptism today. Baptism means "to be identified with." This is a public confession of being identified with Christ in His death and in His resurrection. This is the reason water baptism was so important in the early church.

### **The Ritual For The Burnt Sacrifice (1:5-16)**

And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation [[Lev. 1:5](#)].

Now we come to the ritual for the burnt offering. A proper offering having been chosen -- that is, the right kind of animal -- the sinner brings the victim to the entrance of the tabernacle where he is met by a priest. The sinner himself slays the victim. (There is an exception in [verses 14,15](#).) "For the wages of sin is death . . ." ([Rom. 6:23](#)). Here the innocent dies for the guilty. Just so, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust . . ." ([1Pet. 3:18](#)).

Our sins put Jesus Christ to death. If you want it made very personal, my sin is responsible for the death of Christ; your sin is responsible for the death of Christ. I get a little weary of hearing people argue about who is responsible for the death of Christ. They indict the religious rulers, the nation Israel, or the Roman nation. My friend, people can argue all they wish; the fact is that if I hadn't been a sinner and if you hadn't been a sinner, nobody would have put Him to death. It was our sin that put Him to death!

Every sacrifice had to be slain. Either the sinner or the priest acting for the nation slew the victim. There was no forgiveness apart from the shed blood of the victim. So today, only the blood of Christ can cleanse us from all sin. After the slaying of the victim, the priest took over by sprinkling the blood about the altar. The blood represented life and the sprinkling presented it to God.

And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his pieces.

And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire:

And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar:

But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD [[Lev. 1:6-9](#)].

Everything had to be done decently and in order. God is not the author of confusion. The offering was to be cut into pieces so that it might be exposed and so it could be more easily consumed by the fire. The inner life of the Lord Jesus has been open for inspection for over 1900 years. He has been examined more than any other person. There is more disagreement concerning Him than anyone else. This was true at the time He lived and it is still true today. He still asks the question, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" There are all kinds of opinions today and some of them are blasphemous. Yet it is still true that He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Jesus Christ, who has been under examination all these years, is still the One who is altogether lovely.

And if his offering be of the flocks, namely, of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt sacrifice; he shall bring it a male without blemish.

And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar.

And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat: and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar:

But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water: and the priest shall bring it all, and burn it upon the altar: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD [[Lev. 1:10-13](#)].

Notice again, the offer is cut in pieces and totally exposed.

Fire was to be used on the altar. The fire does not necessarily represent hell, vengeance, or wrath. I disagree with those who magnify that so much. Fire did not represent that at the burning bush. Fire oftentimes represents the purifying energy and the resistless power of God. "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver . . ." ([Mal. 3:3](#)). Fire is that resistless energy of God which sometimes destroys and sometimes cleanses and sometimes consumes. The nature of the object determines the process it will take.

Here in the burnt offering, it speaks of the total commitment of Christ to God. It is absolute consecration. In our experience this is essential also, if we are to worship God in spirit and in truth. "For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God" ([Deut. 4:24](#)).

My friend, you cannot just play around and get very far with God. That is the reason there is so much that is phony in Christian service today. I want to say it kindly but emphatically -- you are not serving God unless you are letting Him cleanse and purify your life. We have forgotten this matter of holiness today. How we need it in our churches and in our own lives!

And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the LORD be of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves, or of young pigeons.

And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn it on the altar; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar:

And he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes [[Lev. 1:14-16](#)].

Poverty was no excuse for not bringing an offering to God. A bird could be substituted for an animal. Anyone could have a bird and offer it. Did you notice that when our Lord was born, His parents offered turtledoves? His parents were poor and He was born in poverty.

### **The Reason For The Burnt Sacrifice (1:17)**

And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD [[Lev. 1:17](#)].

This is the third time it is mentioned that it is a sweet savor to the Lord. This makes it clear that this was the reason for the sacrifice. It is what God sees in Jesus Christ.

### **The Law Of The Burnt Sacrifice (1:17)**

The law of the burnt offering is found in [Leviticus 6:8-13](#). The morning and the evening offerings were burnt sacrifices offered by Aaron and the priests for the nation to God ([Exod. 29:38-46](#)). It was called the continual burnt offering. Christ in consecration ever lives to make intercession for us. This is most beautifully expressed in an ancient "Order for the Visitation of the Sick," attributed to Anselm of Canterbury:

"The minister shall say to the sick man: Dost thou believe that thou canst not be saved but by the death of Christ? The sick man answereth, Yes. Then let it be said unto him: Go to, then, and whilst thy soul abideth in thee, put all thy confidence in this death alone; place thy trust in no other thing; commit thyself wholly to this death; cover thyself wholly with this alone . . . And if God would judge thee, say: Lord! I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and Thy judgment; otherwise I will not contend or enter into judgment with Thee.

"And if He shall say unto thee that thou art a sinner, say: I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and my sins. If He shall say unto thee, that thou hast deserved damnation, say: Lord! I put the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between Thee and all my sins; and I offer His merits for my own, which I should have, and have not.

"And whosoever of us can thus speak, to him the promise speaks from out the shadows of the tent of meeting: 'This Christ, the Lamb of God, the true burnt offering, shall be accepted for thee, to make atonement for thee!' "

This is the law of the burnt offering. God is satisfied with Jesus and He sees us in Christ. He is satisfied, then, with us. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" ([Rom. 3:21-24](#)).

My friend, do you have the sacrifice of Christ between you and your sins? Has His blood been shed that you might live? Have you trusted Him today? God sees Christ as the only One who can satisfy Him for your sins. Have you seen Him like that? Are you still trying to bring your little puny self and your little goodness to offer to God? God won't take that. He only accepts what Christ has done for you and He counts the righteousness of Christ as your righteousness. Trust Him today and live!

## Chapter 2

**THEME:** Offerings mixed but unbaked; offerings mixed and baked; offering of firstfruits; the law of the meal offering

The offerings speak of the person of Christ and of the work of Christ. The burnt offering was a picture of Christ in depth as well as in death. The meal offering reveals the humanity of Jesus in all its perfection and loveliness.

As you read this, you will see it is like a recipe for bread. That is exactly what it is. It is really the meal offering. The Authorized Version calls it a meat offering, which is a misleading term for us today, as no meat was connected with it at all. There is no shedding of blood; so this offering was different from the others. However, it was generally offered with some offering in which there was the shedding of blood. This meal offering could be offered either baked or unbaked. Aaron and his sons received a portion of this offering for themselves. It was to be eaten by all the males in the family of Aaron.

The meal or food offering sets forth the humanity of Jesus in all His perfections. His deity is not in view here. He was perfectly human, and He was the perfect human. God's goal for man is fulfilled in Jesus. He is the second man, but the last Adam. There will be no more Adams, but there will be some more men who are made just like Him. He is the last Adam, the Head of a new people. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" ([1John 3:2](#)).

Friends, man as he is in the world today is the most colossal failure in God's universe. Have you ever stopped to think about that? The Scriptures are outspoken and specific at this point. "They are all gone out of the way, [the original here suggests that they are a wreck] they are together become unprofitable . . ." and ". . . all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" ([Rom. 3:12, 23](#)).

God cannot save us on the basis of our keeping His Law for the very simple reason that God sees our imperfections. We cannot fulfill or keep the Law. We cannot render perfection to Him. God can't save us in our imperfections because He is a holy God and

demands absolute righteousness and perfection. Imperfection is the very best that we can do. Therefore, mankind is a failure.

"The way of peace they have not known" is confirmed in every morning newspaper. Why is this? Because war and violence are in the very heart of man. It is almost amusing to hear about the peace demonstrations that end up in a brawl! With feverish energy man is presently trying to perfect fiendish instruments of frightful destruction. Surely this is not the goal of man!

God has another purpose in view for man and if you want to see what He has in mind, look at Jesus. Here is the Man who pleased God. There was a glory in His manhood. The loveliness of Jesus was truly a sweet perfume. His coming was a doxology; His stay was a blessing; His departure was a benediction. His winsomeness has filled the world with a new hope and ideal concerning man.

There are two important aspects of this offering: the ingredients which are included and the ingredients which are excluded.

### **Offerings Mixed But Unbaked (2:1-3)**

And when any will offer a meat offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon [[Lev. 2:1](#)].

The offering was to be made of fine flour and fine flour in that day was a little unusual. They didn't have the great mills as we have today in Minneapolis. Actually, they ground it by hand in a kind of rock bowl. They used a pestle, with which they just beat the grain down. It was often very coarse and uneven if the grinder was careless or in a hurry. If the flour was to be very fine, it meant they must spend a great deal of time with it. This offering had to be made of very fine flour which means that it was well beaten.

This sets before us the Lord Jesus in His personality. Today I am sure we would use the expression that He had a well-integrated personality. He was a normal person. Actually, I think He was the only normal person who has ever been on this earth. Sin has made all of the human race lumpy, one-sided, abnormal. One part of our personality has overdeveloped at the expense of some other area of our personality.

In college I studied abnormal psychology. In my last year of college I went to see the professor of the department and said that I needed to talk to him. I told him that when we looked at the etiology of the disease of every form of abnormality that we had been studying, I found that I had symptoms of all these forms of abnormality. He broke out in laughter and said to me, "I was wondering when you would come. All the rest of the class has been here. They all have it, and I have it, too." You see, all of us do. Recently a leading psychologist made the statement that all of mankind today is a little "off." We are all just a little off-center. Jesus was the only normal person.

Notice how uneven were the characters of men of the Bible. Samson was enabled to perform great physical feats, but he seems to have been weak both in will and mind. In fact, he was a sissy. Paul was a mental giant, but he appeared to be weak in body. Simon Peter was moved by his emotions, even declaring that he would die for Jesus, yet he

denied Him, which reveals a definite weakness in the area of the volition. King Saul was self-willed and stubborn, unable to bow the knee in obedience to God. This led to his dismissal and then to his death. All of these men were lumpy. They had over and underdeveloped personalities.

In contrast to them and all of us, Jesus was well balanced. He had equal poise in all areas of His personality. He could drive the money changers from the temple, and He could take the little children into His arms. When He was twelve years old, the religious rulers marvelled at His wisdom. When He began to teach, the people were amazed, saying, ". . . How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" ([John 7:15](#)). Nevertheless, the Lord Jesus never appealed to His intellect as the basis for any judgment. Have you ever noticed that this was never the criterion for His conduct? He came to do the Father's will, and that was the motive for His actions.

Jesus could weep at the tomb of Lazarus or over the indifferent city of Jerusalem. At the same time, He would raise Lazarus from the dead, and He would pronounce a severe judgment on Jerusalem (which was literally fulfilled). He wasn't swayed or guided by His emotions. He was never self-willed, yet nothing could hinder Him from going to Jerusalem to die. At all times He could say, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" ([John 6:38](#)). His own volitional nature was not the guideline for His action. He was even; all of us are lumpy.

"He shall pour oil upon it" -- olive oil speaks of the Holy Spirit. You will notice that here it is "oil upon it." In [verses 4](#) and 5 it is "mingled with oil"; in [verse 6](#) it is "pour oil thereon"; in [verse 7](#) it is "with oil." The offering was drenched with oil. The oil was a very important part of the offering and was applied in many different ways.

The prominence of the Holy Spirit in the human life of Jesus is very noticeable. He was born of the Spirit -- "mingled with oil" ([Luke 1:35](#)). He was baptized of the Spirit -- "oil upon it" ([Matt. 3:16-17](#)). He was led of the Spirit -- "pour oil thereon" ([Mark 1:12](#)). He taught, performed miracles, and offered Himself in the power of the Holy Spirit -- "with oil" ([John 3:34](#); [Matt. 12:28](#)).

If the Lord Jesus in His perfect humanity needed the Holy Spirit, surely you and I need Him to an even greater extent. We can do nothing of ourselves.

Frankincense was made from a secret formula. There evidently was a form of incense with which it was mixed ([Exod. 30:34](#)), but was distinguished from it. It was made from some part of a plant or tree, perhaps the bark or leaves, and it exuded its fragrance only when crushed, beaten, burned, or put under pressure. This speaks of the life of the Lord Jesus as He manifested the fragrance of His life under the fires of tension, pressures, and persecution. This is what the Father saw in Him as the One in whom He delighted. There was a special fragrance about His life, and there should be a fragrance in our lives also, since we belong to Him.

And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests: and he shall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn the memorial

of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD [[Lev. 2:2](#)].

The priests received a portion of the meal offering. They were to take out a percentage of each item. Apparently the remainder was mixed and then burnt upon the altar.

And the remnant of the meat offerings shall be Aaron's and his sons': it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire [[Lev. 2:3](#)].

Emphasis is laid upon the fact that this offering was burnt upon the altar although no blood was shed in connection with it. Great emphasis is placed upon the fire ([Lev. 2:2, 9, 16](#) and [Lev. 6:15, 17-18](#)).

### **Offerings Mixed And Baked (2:4-13)**

And if thou bring an oblation of a meat offering baken in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.

And if thy oblation be a meat offering baken in a pan, it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil.

Thou shalt part it in pieces, and pour oil thereon: it is a meat offering.

And if thy oblation be a meat offering baken in the fryingpan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.

And thou shalt bring the meat offering that is made of these things unto the LORD: and when it is presented unto the priest, he shall bring it unto the altar.

And the priest shall take from the meat offering a memorial thereof, and shall burn it upon the altar: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

And that which is left of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons': it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire [[Lev. 2:4-10](#)].

These are detailed instructions for the ritual of the meal offering and it sounds, very frankly, like a recipe for making bread. The emphasis upon the fine flour and the oil is repeated again and again. Also, the fire is mentioned over and over. I want to say with great emphasis that the fire here does not symbolize hell under any circumstance. It is God's purifying energy and power which brought out the sweetness in the life of Christ.

In [verse 9](#) it is specifically declared to be a "sweet savour unto the Lord." The final and full meaning of this offering is what God sees in Christ. His sweetness came out under pressure. In your experience and mine sweetness doesn't always come out from us when we are under pressure. I've heard some Christians say some very ugly things when they were under tension. But as more tension was placed on Him, the sweeter He was. The Lord Jesus could say, "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" ([John 8:29](#)).

What was left of the meal offering was to be Aaron's and his sons'. Believers have the high privilege of sharing Christ with God the Father. What do you see in Him? Is there sweetness about Him? Have you smelled the sweetness and fragrance of His life?

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" ([John 6:53-58](#)). If you want any sweetness in your life, and if I want any, we must partake of Christ. Not literally, of course. We are not cannibals. We partake of Him by faith and we appropriate Him into our lives. As we partake of Him, the sweetness of His life should come into our lives.

**No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire [[Lev. 2:11](#)].**

The ingredients excluded in this offering are as prominent as the ingredients included. The two mentioned here by name are leaven and honey.

Leaven will be mentioned in the Scriptures again and again. Leaven in Scripture is everywhere presented as a principle of evil. The Lord Jesus Christ warned His disciples of the leaven of the Pharisees. He was talking about the doctrine of the Pharisees, their teaching. That is the leaven. Evil teaching is the leaven. Leaven is the principle of evil. Leaven is to be excluded from the offering. This speaks of the fact that there is no evil in Christ. There is no sin in the life of Christ.

Honey was also excluded. It represents natural sweetness. It will sour, just as leaven is a souring thing. There are Christians who assume a pious pose in public. They wear a Sunday smile. They call everyone "brother" and "my dear So-and-So." Their halo is polished with the latest miracle cleanser. Yet these same folk can and do engage in vicious slander and malicious gossip. They are more dangerous than a killer with a gun. May I say to you that there are a lot of folk who have honey in their lives.

The Lord Jesus told it like it is, friends. There was no corrupting principle in the life of Jesus. He did not exhibit honey sweetness, nor was there any leaven in His speech that made it acceptable to the natural man.

**As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ye shall offer them unto the LORD: but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour [[Lev. 2:12](#)].**

This offering was a sweet savor sacrifice, but it was not to derive its sweetness from the palatable ingredient of leaven nor the natural sweetness of honey.

**And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be**

lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt [[Lev. 2:13](#)].

Salt is the final ingredient which was included in the meal offering. Salt is a preservative and is the opposite of leaven. Leaven produces decay; salt preserves from corruption. "The salt of the covenant" is still eaten among Arabs as a seal to bind one in faithful obedience to a covenant.

Salt was the token of faithfulness between the offerer and God. Christ is faithful. This is one of His many-faceted names. He is Faithful and True ([Rev. 19:11](#)). He is the Lord Jesus.

Christ offered Himself to God. We can offer ourselves to God because of His mercy. We ought to be found faithful. Christians are to be the salt in the world. We do this by offering ourselves as a living sacrifice to God ([Rom. 12:1-2](#)).

### **Offering Of Firstfruits (2:14-16)**

And if thou offer a meat offering of thy firstfruits unto the LORD, thou shalt offer for the meat offering of thy firstfruits green ears of corn dried by the fire, even corn beaten out of full ears.

And thou shalt put oil upon it, and lay frankincense thereon: it is a meat offering.

And the priest shall burn the memorial of it, part of the beaten corn thereof, and part of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD [[Lev. 2:14-16](#)].

The Feast of Firstfruits, as given in [Leviticus 23:9-14](#), was a meal offering as well as the Feast of Pentecost.

### **The Law Of The Meal Offering (2:14-16)**

The law of the meal offering is given in [Leviticus 6:14-23](#). It reveals that with every burnt sacrifice in the morning and in the evening, a meal offering was also made. (See [Exod. 29:39-40](#).)

The meal offering sets forth Christ in His consecration. It also represents the consecration of believers in Christ. It pictures the perfect humanity of Christ.

## **Chapter 3**

**THEME:** A sacrifice from the herd; a sacrifice from the flock; a sacrifice from the goats; the law of the peace offering

This offering speaks of the communion and fellowship of believers with God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. The only way you and I can come to God is through Jesus Christ. He is the Way!

No single offering can set forth the manifold wonders of the person of Christ and the many facets of His glory. Just as we need four Gospels in the New Testament to set forth

His earthly life, so also we need the five offerings of Leviticus to set forth His person and work.

We will notice that there are striking similarities between the peace offering and the burnt offering, but we will also note sharp contrast. So the peace offering is also a unique offering.

The peace offering does not speak of the peace that Christ made through His blood on the Cross, as that has to do with sin and comes properly under the non-sweet savor offerings. It is concerning Christ being made our Peace as regards sin that Paul writes in [Colossians 1:20-22](#): "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight." That is not the peace offering.

Rather, the peace offering speaks more specifically of the peace to which Paul referred in Ephesians, the peace which brings all believers into communion with the Father by the Holy Spirit, through the Lord Jesus Christ. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" ([Eph. 2:13-22](#)).

In the peace offering, the emphasis is not upon the peace that He made by the blood of the Cross, but upon the peace He is because of the blood of the Cross. He is the meeting place of all believers together and of each believer with God the Father. Christ is the only one who can break down the walls that separate individuals, families, religions, races, and nations. All are made one in Christ. Then they become a habitation of God in the Spirit and have access to the Father. You see, only believers can join together in partaking of the wonders, the beauties, and the glories of Christ. They can have communion with the Father and fellowship one with another as they share the things of Christ.

This is what the apostle John is saying. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" ([1John 1:3](#)). The peace offering brings us together. It is only as we meet around the person of Christ that we can be drawn together. Friends, don't tell me to have fellowship with every Tom, Dick, and Harry! I cannot. But there is nothing that keeps me from fellowshiping with any person, I don't care who he is, if he

can meet with me around the person of Christ. We are all made one there. We are all on the same level there. We can all enjoy the person of Christ.

### **A Sacrifice From The Herd (3:1-5)**

And if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace offering, if he offer it of the herd; whether it be a male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD [[Lev. 3:1](#)].

The peace offering is in one sense all comprehensive. The sinner can come to God because Christ made peace by the blood of His Cross. There is also communion with God and fellowship with Him on the basis of peace by the blood of His Cross. Christ and His work of redemption is the complete satisfaction for peace. The emphasis of the peace offering, however, is chiefly on the communion.

What is the gospel appeal to the sinner? Well, it is like this. God says to you and me as sinners, "You are lost. You are alienated from Me, so I will have to consign you to the darkness of eternity." If God did that, He would be just and holy and all the angels in heaven would sing praises to His name. But, my friend, God is satisfied with what Jesus did for you and now you can come to God. The gospel message is this: "God is reconciled!" The question is, "Will you be reconciled?" God is satisfied with what Jesus did. That is the message. That is the good news. God has already turned to you. Will you turn to Him? He will accept you because of what Christ has done. Will you be satisfied with Christ and what He has done, and will you come to God and have fellowship? That is the peace that you can know.

The peace offering is different from the burnt offering in several respects. In the burnt offering only a male could be offered, but here it can be either a male or female -- but without blemish. The offerer will never find as much in Christ as God finds in Him. In the burnt offering it speaks of what God sees in Christ. In the peace offering it is the offerer who finds something in Christ. The female offering was permitted because here the capacity of the offerer to enjoy Christ is in view. The offerer will never find as much in Christ as God finds in Him.

And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about [[Lev. 3:2](#)].

Up to this point, it duplicates the burnt offering.

And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards.

And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away [[Lev. 3:3-4](#)].

Here the contrast with the burnt sacrifice is noted. All of the burnt offering was placed on that altar. In the peace offering, only a portion was offered. The portion was specified. It was to be the choice portion which included the fat and the inward parts. These speak of

the hidden riches, the precious qualities, the priceless value of the character of Christ that God alone knows.

Sometimes a loved one knows the real worth of a great man who has been bitterly assailed in public. Early in my ministry, I became acquainted with a great preacher, and he and his family became my friends. An attack was made upon him, and harsh things were said about him. His family knew and I knew that they were lies. Just so, there are a lot of things said about Christ that are not true. A great many people say, "I don't understand this and I don't understand that about Christ." There is a lot I don't understand about Him either. But God knows Him! God sees more in Him than you and I can see. God sees the inward parts. We just don't know Him. That is why Paul cried out, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings . . ." ([Phil. 3:10](#)).

And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD [[Lev. 3:5](#)].

The offering was consumed by fire and this speaks of the total dedication of Christ and His human testing and sufferings. It is specifically labeled, "a sweet savour unto the LORD." The emphasis is still upon the person of Christ and not upon His work. It is His perfect life that is in view, not His death for sin. His sufferings in life were not for the sins of the world. Even in the first three hours on the Cross, His suffering was at the hands of men. It was during the last three hours on the Cross that it became an altar on which the Son of God was offered. Darkness veiled from the eye of man those last three hours when it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, when He put Him to grief, when He made His soul an offering for sin ([Isa. 53:10](#)).

Notice that the peace offering was put together with the burnt offering. They belong together in order to get the full view of the inward values and glories of Christ.

### **A Sacrifice From The Flock (3:6-11)**

And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering unto the LORD be of the flock; male or female, he shall offer it without blemish.

If he offer a lamb for his offering, then shall he offer it before the LORD [[Lev. 3:6-7](#)].

The lamb sets forth in a peculiar way the character of Christ and is, therefore, unusually appropriate as a sacrifice in the peace offering.

By contrast the bullock, or the heifer from the herd, sets forth the servant side of our Lord's ministry. The bullock was a domesticated animal, used to bear burdens and to plow fields, and so represented transportation and commerce in that day. The bullock was a servant and a friend of man. The bullock represents Christ as a servant. This is the aspect of Christ's ministry which is set forth in the Gospel of Mark. We need to emphasize that Christ as a servant was not a bellboy or a shoeshiner for man. He did not run at man's bidding. The Gospel of Mark sets Him forth as God's Servant. He came to do the will of God.

However, the lamb sets forth Christ in His complete identification with man in life and in death. Have you ever noticed that? At the beginning of His ministry, John the Baptist pointed Him out as ". . . the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" ([John 1:29](#)). That referred to His work. Later, he said, ". . . Behold the Lamb of God!" ([John 1:36](#)) -- referring to His person.

From the beginning, the Lamb has set forth His quality and ability to take the place of man in bearing the sin of the world. The very first offering made by Abel was the sacrifice of a lamb. I think that God clothed Adam and Eve with lambs' skins. I can't prove that, but I believe it in view of the fact that Abel brought a lamb.

[Isaiah 53](#) makes it very clear that Jesus Christ was our substitute, carrying our sins and iniquities. ". . . He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" ([Isa. 53:7](#)). He is pictured as a lamb. The Lamb becomes our substitute.

He is also called a lamb in His resurrection. "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" ([Rev. 5:6](#)). Again, He is a Lamb in His return in glory. "And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" ([Rev. 6:16-17](#)).

The lamb is probably the most complete representation of Christ of all the sacrifices.

And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar.

And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat thereof, and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone; and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards.

And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away [[Lev. 3:8-10](#)].

The ritual is similar to that given concerning one of the herd. The fat was God's portion. It was considered the better part of the animal. A fat animal was the best type, and the best was offered to God.

There are many passages to illustrate that fat was considered the best: ". . . Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet . . ." ([Neh. 8:10](#)). "And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined" ([Isa. 25:6](#)). "And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry" ([Luke 15:23](#)). Today, those of us who need to reduce our weight try not to eat the fat, but it is obvious that the fat was considered the choice part. God precisely declared, "all the fat that is upon the inwards

and the two kidneys and the fat that is upon them" was to be for Him. God demanded the best.

We see here the deep and full meaning of the peace offering. Fellowship with God rests upon the blood of Christ, it is true, but there is another aspect of this fellowship. To make it complete and final there must be the presentation of the life of the believer in total dedication. Both of these aspects are included by Jesus Christ in His wonderful, inclusive invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" ([Matt. 11:28](#)). There is a rest that He gives, which is typified by the shed blood. This is the rest of redemption. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" ([Matt. 11:29-30](#)) -- this is a rest that we find, which is represented by the fat. We must come to Him and offer ourselves to Him. This is the rest of dedication.

The expression "the whole rump" is translated in the American Standard Version of 1901 as "the fat tail entire." This has reference to a special breed of sheep peculiar to that geographical area. The tail of this breed weighs as much as 15 pounds, and is very fatty.

And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire unto the LORD [[Lev. 3:11](#)].

This is a strange clause and some have tried to associate it with pagan offerings. We know from an Assyrian inscription of Esarhaddon that offerers sacrificed victims to the gods and then feasted with the gods. However, in the peace offering, the very opposite is true. God feasts the offerer. God makes this very clear in [Deuteronomy 12:6-7](#): "And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: and there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee." The fat was totally consumed, but the priest received the breast and the shoulder. The offerer ate the remainder, and he did it in God's house. God was the host and the offerer, the sinner was the guest.

Heathenism has it backwards and that was the basis of Isaiah's charge against Israel when they went into idolatry. "But ye are they that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that number" ([Isa. 65:11](#)). The American Standard Version says, "that prepare a table for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny."

God provides the table and the peace offering! This throws light upon many verses of Scripture: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies . . ." ([Ps. 23:5](#)). "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house . . ." ([Ps. 36:8](#)). "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever . . . so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" ([John 6:51, 57](#)). ". . . Take, eat; this is my body" ([Matt. 26:26](#)).

The Lord prepares the table of salvation and fellowship. This is emphasized in the peace offering. This helps us to understand the parable of the prodigal son. It is the Father who kills the fatted calf when the son is restored to fellowship. In the parable of the great

supper, it is the Lord who invites, ". . . Come; for all things are now ready" ([Luke 14:17](#)). This is the table of salvation which God has provided. And then read [1 John 1](#) again and again. Fellowship with God rests upon the redemption of Christ through His blood and upon our knowing Christ and confessing our sins. First we accept God's salvation by accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior; then we come to the table of fellowship.

Modern man thinks he can provide a table of salvation of his own works and invite God to come to eat. My friend, that is a purely pagan notion. God provides the table of salvation; God provides the table of fellowship.

### **A Sacrifice From The Goats (3:12-17)**

And if his offering be a goat, then he shall offer it before the LORD  
[[Lev. 3:12](#)].

This is the third and final type of sacrifice for the peace offering. All three types of sacrifice are essential to portray the different aspects of Christ in the peace offering. The goat represents the complete identification of Christ as adequate to take away the sin of man. He was made sin for us. That is not just a nice statement but an actual fact. He is the propitiation for our sins, which means that He adequately and totally paid the penalty for our sins. You hear the expression, "I don't want anyone to make a goat of me." Well, friends, Christ was willing to be made a goat for you. He took the full penalty of your sin and my sin. His offering for sin is clearly set forth in [Hebrews 10:6-14](#).

The ritual of it follows the pattern of the offering of the herd and of the flock.

And he shall lay his hand upon the head of it, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle the blood thereof upon the altar round about.

And he shall offer thereof his offering, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

And the priest shall burn them upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour: all the fat is the LORD'S.

It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood [[Lev. 3:13-17](#)].

There are two statements here that should detain us for a moment: "all the fat is the LORD's" and "that ye eat neither fat nor blood." These two prohibitions are indeed striking. They are amplified in the law of the peace offerings in chapter 7.

The reason for the prohibition of eating blood is stated in [Leviticus 17:10-14](#), and we will go into that later in our study.

The reason for the prohibition of eating the fat is given here. The fat is the Lord's. Man was reminded that he was redeemed by blood. That is the basis and ground of our

acceptance before God. That brings us to the table of communion and fellowship with God. But the fat is the Lord's. He demands the best. If we are to enjoy to the fullest our fellowship with Him, it is imperative that we give Him our best. There must be total dedication to Him. Loving sacrifice of our lives must follow our redemption in order to enter into His sweet peace of communion. This is the message of [Romans 12](#), [John 15:14](#), and [Philippians 3:10-14](#). Salvation is by the blood. Sanctification and service are by the fat.

### **The Law Of The Peace Offering (3:12-17)**

The law of the peace offering is given in [Leviticus 7:11-38](#). It is the most extensive of all the instructions of the five offerings and it is the last. The value of the other offerings must be entered into before we can enjoy the peace of God.

We will go into more detail in chapter 7. Suffice it to say here that Aaron and his sons, the priests, received as their portion of the peace offering the breast and the shoulder. The breast speaks of the love of Christ for us and the shoulder speaks of the power and strength of Christ. He is able to save to the uttermost. This is our portion in Christ.

Do you hear Him, Christian friend, do you hear Him in His peace offering?

## **Chapter 4**

**THEME:** Sins of ignorance; sins of the priest; sins of the congregation; sins of the ruler; sins of the common people; the law of the sin offering

This is the first of the non-sweet savor offerings. The three sweet savor offerings set forth the person of Christ in all of His glorious character. The two non-sweet savor offerings set forth the work of Christ on the Cross for sin. The sin offering speaks of sin as a nature. The trespass offering speaks of sin as an act. You see, man is a sinner by nature, and he is a sinner because of what he does. He does what he does because he is a sinner by nature.

Several striking features of the sin offering set it apart from the other offerings and distinguish its importance:

1. It is the longest account of any offering since it is twice as long as any of the other four. The burnt offering was 17 verses; the meal offering, 16 verses; the peace offering, 17 verses; the trespass offering, 19 verses; the sin offering, 35 verses. Evidently the Spirit of God thought this was very important.
2. The sin offering was an entirely new offering. Up to this time, there is no record anywhere of a sin offering. There is no previous record of it occurring in Scripture. No heathen nation had anything that was even similar to it.
3. From the time of the giving of the Law, it became the most important and significant offering. You see, man was a sinner before the giving of the Law, but actually it was the Law which revealed to him that he was a sinner. The sin offering was offered during all of the feasts -- Passover, Pentecost, Trumpets, and Tabernacles. It was offered on the

great Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). It brought the High Priest into the Holy of Holies.

4. It is in contrast to the burnt sacrifice, although it was made in the same place. "Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: in the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD: it is most holy" ([Lev. 6:25](#)).

Where the burnt offering leaves off, the sin offering begins. The burnt offering tells who Christ is; the sin offering tells what Christ did. In the burnt offering Christ meets the demands of God's high and holy standard; in the sin offering Christ meets the deep and desperate needs of man. In the burnt offering we see the preciousness of Christ; in the sin offering we see the hatefulness of sin.

The burnt offering was a voluntary offering; the sin offering was commanded. The burnt offering ascended; the sin offering was poured out. The one went up and the other went down.

### **Sins Of Ignorance (4:1-2)**

[And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,](#)

[Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them \[Lev. 4:1-2\].](#)

The emphasis here is upon a sin committed in ignorance. If a man sinned willfully and deliberately, this offering did not avail. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses" ([Heb. 10:28](#)). This speaks of the fact that there is no salvation for a person who wilfully rejects Jesus Christ. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" ([Heb. 10:26-27](#)).

Sins of ignorance reveal the underlying truth that man is a sinner by nature. My friend, I must say this to you: You are a sinner whether you know it or not. You are a sinner by nature, and so am I. That is the reason we commit sins. Regardless of the estimation of any given time or custom, man is a sinner. God's attitude toward sin does not change. We do those things which are contrary to God because it is impossible for the natural man to do anything that will please God. Natural man does not have that capacity. He is a sinner by nature. These sins must be called to man's attention. It is sin regardless of who commits it.

The sin offering gave a profound conviction of sin. This conviction stands out in the literature of the race. The deep guilt complex of man must be diagnosed before an adequate remedy can be prescribed.

Listen to the psalmist, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" ([Ps. 139:23-24](#)). "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight:

that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest" ([Ps. 51:4](#)).

This is what I call getting on the Lord Jesus Christ's couch instead of going to the psychiatrist's couch. A great many people with a guilt complex go to the psychiatrists today. One would get the impression that the psychiatrist or psychologist has a skill that the Word of God does not reveal. I think that is a wrong impression. The Word of God contains the remedy for man today. If you have a problem and you are bothered with a guilt complex, a personality problem, why don't you go to the Lord's couch and cry out, "Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me. See if there be any wicked way in me." My friend, our problem is not that our mothers didn't give us all the love we should have had when we were little brats; our problem is that we are sinners by nature. So let's get on God's couch and tell Him that.

The sins of ignorance were acts committed by a person who at the time did not know they were sin. "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults" ([Ps. 19:12](#)). How we need to confess to God that we are sinful human beings! If you can't think of anything special to confess, then just confess who you are, a sinner.

A group of men gathered regularly for prayer and one man would always pray, "Lord, if we have committed any sin, forgive us." The men got tired of this little formula and one of them said to him, "Why don't you tell Him what the sin is?" The man answered, "Well, I don't know what it is." The leader said, "Why don't you take a guess at it?" And do you know, the man's first guess was right! We need to confess our sins to God!

If a man sinned through ignorance, rashness, or accident, God made provision for his deliverance. He established the cities of refuge ([Num. 35:11](#)). God has a refuge for you too, my friend; He has a remedy for you. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" ([1John 2:1](#)).

Paul explains the reason he was the chief of sinners and why he obtained mercy. He was a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious, but he obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly in unbelief. He goes on to say, "And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" ([1Tim. 1:14-15](#)).

My dad died when I was fourteen, and soon I was obliged to go into the business world. There I teamed up with the wrong crowd. I was out doing things that a man twenty-five years old was doing, and I was just sixteen years old. I'm not offering an excuse, but I really didn't know then how bad it was. Then there came that day when I received Christ, and from that day to this, I look back and hate myself for what I did. Thank God, friend, there is a sin offering. Christ died for me; so I can go and tell Him all about it. I don't need to crawl up on anybody's couch and tell him about it. It's none of his business. But it sure is God's business and I must tell Him about it. He forgives me because He took care of all my sins at the Cross.

The sin offering teaches us that we must see ourselves as God sees us. It brings before us the consciousness of sin and our own unworthiness, but also God's provision. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" ([Ps. 32:5](#)). It lifts the guilt complex.

The sin offering taught its own inadequacy. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required" ([Ps. 40:6](#)). It pointed the way to God's perfect satisfaction for sin and His forgiveness.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" ([Heb. 10:19-22](#)). Now you and I, sinners, can come into His presence with boldness. Why? Because Jesus is our sin offering, even for these sins of ignorance.

Sin through ignorance brings to our attention another side of God's justice and His absolute fairness in dealing with man. God will deal with man in equity. There will be degrees of punishment as there will be degrees of rewards. The degree of responsibility is also recognized in the sin offering as we shall see in the different classes of people who are considered here.

### **Sins Of The Priest (4:3-12)**

If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering [[Lev. 4:3](#)].

The sin of the priest is considered first, for he stood in the place of leadership. If he was wrong, the people were wrong. His sin was their sin. Like priest, like people. He was to bring a young bullock, the most valuable animal of all, as his offering. You see that the position of the one who sinned determined the type of animal for the sin sacrifice. His sin was no different, but his responsibility was greater.

It is still the same today. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" ([James 4:17](#)). "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" ([James 3:1](#)). Do you want to be a preacher? It makes you more responsible. Do you want to sing a solo? It makes you responsible. Do you want to be a deacon or an officer in the church, or a teacher of a Sunday school class? Then you are more responsible than anyone else. Privilege carries with it a responsibility, and God Himself will hold you to that responsibility.

That is what is clearly shown here. "According to the sins of the people" could be more properly translated "so as to cause the people to sin." This points out the responsibility of the priest. He was a mere human being and he was subject to the same temptations as the remainder of the race. "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity . . ." ([Heb. 7:28](#)). It is in this point that there is a radical difference between Christ, our great High Priest, and the priests of the order of Aaron. "For we have not an high priest which

cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" ([Heb. 4:15](#)).

And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the LORD [[Lev. 4:4](#)].

This is the ritual for the sin offering. In this part of the ritual there is a similarity to the burnt offering.

And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation:

And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the veil of the sanctuary.

And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation [[Lev. 4:5-7](#)].

To sprinkle the blood seven times before the veil secured God's relationship with the offender. To put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of incense, the place of prayer, was to restore the privilege of worship to the offender. Our acceptance by God and our worship of Him are dependent upon the blood of Jesus Christ. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1John 1:9](#)). "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" ([Heb. 9:22](#)).

The remainder of the blood was poured out at the bottom of the brazen altar. This satisfied the conscience of the sinner and removed the guilt complex. This was the remedy for the conviction of sin and the only remedy that could satisfy the mind and heart.

My friend, the important thing for you to understand is that when Christ forgives you your sin, He also forgives you. There is nothing more to be said about it. He has put it in the bottom of the sea. He has removed it as far as the east is from the west. He has removed it so that He will not even remember it. He settles the sin question. That rids us of our guilt complexes. You need never wonder whether He has really forgiven you. He took away all your sin and guilt. All of it. When you come to Christ and see Him, you will find Him adequate.

And he shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin offering; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away,

As it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt offering [[Lev. 4:8-10](#)].

Here the ritual of the sin sacrifice follows that of the peace offering. The sin has been forgiven. Fellowship is restored and service is again restored. The fat is offered to be burned on the altar. Remember that the fat represents the very best.

And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung,

Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt [[Lev. 4:11-12](#)].

At this point there is a radical departure from the other offerings. The remainder of the bullock was taken without the camp and burned there. We believe that this is simply an emphasis upon the exceeding sinfulness of sin. This animal was the sin offering -- there is no thought of consecration or signifying the person of Christ. Rather, this is Christ, the sin-bearer, the One who was made sin for us. This deeper meaning is given to us in Hebrews. "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" ([Heb. 13:10-14](#)). Let us ponder this Scripture well. Religion can never satisfy the heart or meet the requirements of a God who is holy. Only the death of Christ on the Cross can give us forgiveness of sins. We are sinners by nature and we are not fit for heaven. If God would consign this entire world into a lost eternity, the angels in heaven would still sing, "Holy, holy, holy!" But thank God, He didn't do that. He loved us so much that He sent Jesus Christ to be made sin for us. Don't try to solve the problem of your sin in any other way than to turn and trust Christ. He is adequate. He meets the deep need in your heart and soul. He alone can offer you forgiveness for sin. The death of Christ on the Cross as our sin-bearer is the only solution there is to sin. That is the meaning of that part of the animal which had to be burned outside the camp.

### **Sins Of The Congregation (4:13-15)**

And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty;

When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation [[Lev. 4:13-14](#)].

The victim for the entire congregation was the same as for the priest. A young bullock was the most valuable animal for offering. You see, the high priest represented the entire congregation before the Lord, so the requirement would be the same.

I think there is another lesson here. There is not only an individual responsibility before God but there is also a corporate responsibility. God judges nations, and many people who didn't participate in the sin of the nation are judged along with it.

When Jerusalem was destroyed in B.C. 70, the whole nation went into captivity. When the Roman Empire disintegrated, everyone went down with it. Friends, you and I are responsible since we are a part of the nation.

God also judges churches and local congregations. I hear people say that they are going to stay in a liberal church and try to witness to it. Where do they get that idea? It's not in the Word of God. If you identify yourself with a church which does not teach the truth from the Word of God, God will judge you right along with that church. Your responsibility is an individual responsibility, but when you join yourself with something, you are placed under corporate responsibility also. When the Lord sent His messages to the seven churches of Asia in the Book of Revelation, the message was to the churches and to every member of each church.

And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD [[Lev. 4:15](#)].

The elders represented the nation. Similarly, the elders in the Book of Revelation represent the church.

Now the ritual here is identical with the offering of the priest. I'll not go over that again. It is explained in [verses 16-21](#).

### **Sins Of The Ruler (4:22-23)**

When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty;

Or, if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish [[Lev. 4:22-23](#)].

You will notice that all these different groups are to bring an offering because they are sinners. Their responsibility is different in each case, but they are all guilty. This has reference to a civil ruler. People who are rulers are often charged inaccurately and there is gossip about them. This must be real guilt. His sin must come to his knowledge and then he shall bring his offering. Again, the ruler is in a place of responsibility. His offering was of less worth than that of the priest or the entire congregation, but it was of more value than that of a private person.

This teaches us the lesson that rulers are ordained of God and thereby are responsible to God. Unfortunately, our politicians today do not seek to please God. I have listened to many of their speeches and I have yet to hear one of them, Democrat or Republican, say that he feels that he has a responsibility to God. They are always trying to please the

people. You hear them talk of their constituents. God says that they are responsible to Him!

The ruler was to bring an offering of a kid of the goats, a male without blemish. The offering was not as valuable as the bullock. The ritual and the procedure for the offering for the ruler follow the same steps as that for the priest and for the people. You see, the sin of the man is the same as if he were a private citizen. The value of the animal he must sacrifice indicates the degree of his responsibility.

### **Sins Of The Common People (4:27-28)**

And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty [[Lev. 4:27](#)].

This is now talking about the common person, the private citizen. The offering is for a sin through ignorance but a sin against a commandment of God. It is against something specifically stated as being forbidden. His guilt cannot be just hearsay, but the guilt must be established.

Again, this offering was to lift the guilt complex and satisfy the conscience. Only the death of Christ can lift the crushing guilt complex from modern man. Psychological procedures have not been able to accomplish this. A person's conscience may be seared with a hot iron and the guilt may be transferred from one area to another, but deep in the human heart the strange guilt complex lingers. It is removed only when it is brought to Christ for His forgiveness.

Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned [[Lev. 4:28](#)].

If a sin comes to his knowledge later, then it is no longer a sin through ignorance, but it requires the same sacrifice. What does the believer do today? He has come to Christ as a lost sinner and accepted Him as his Savior. Then, when he finds that he has sinned, he confesses it to God. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1John 1:9](#)).

A female kid of the goats was an offering of less value than any previous offering. Yet, an offering was required. All of these offerings point to the death of Christ.

Again, the ritual is the same for all classifications of humanity. A female lamb was also acceptable according to [verse 32](#), and again the ritual of the lamb was the same.

The important clause to notice is, "it shall be forgiven him" in [verse 31](#) and [verse 35](#). The important truth is that complete forgiveness was secured for the sinner. Total absolution was accomplished. This is exactly what was accomplished for us when Christ died. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" ([Eph. 1:7](#)).

### **The Law Of The Sin Offering (6:24-30)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD: it is most holy [[Lev. 6:24-25](#)].

The place for the sin offering was the same as the place for the burnt offering. Both refer to Christ.

The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place [[Lev. 6:26-27](#)].

The sin offering was holy. You remember that Christ on the Cross cried out to God with words from [Psalm 22](#). "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel" ([Ps. 22:1-3](#)).

Christ became sin for us on the Cross and yet He was holy. God withdrew from Him and yet God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. I don't understand it; this is a great mystery. He was holy and is still holy yet our sin was put on Him. We will never know or understand what He suffered on the Cross; because He is holy and since we are not, we do not know what suffering really is.

But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken: and if it be sodden in a brasen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water.

All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy.

And no sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire [[Lev. 6:28-30](#)].

The law is meticulous even concerning the vessels. You see, the offering was for sin, and sin is the opposite of holiness. God is giving the final reminder of this.

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" ([Isa. 55:7-9](#)). We need to be reminded of the fact that He saved us from sin, not to sin. That is very important for us to note. Paul writes, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" ([Rom. 6:1-2](#)).

## Chapter 5

**THEME:** The trespass offering: specific acts of sin committed in ignorance; non-specific acts of sin committed in ignorance

Some expositors treat the first 13 verses of this chapter as part of the sin offering. There is ample justification for this, as the word trespass in [verses 6](#) and 7 can be translated "guilt" and should be "for his guilt." In [verses 6,7,9](#), and 11, the sin offering is required for the trespass because the act of sin is caused by the nature of sin. All sin comes from the same source: the sin nature. You and I inherited it from Adam. The ax must be laid at the root as well as at the fruit.

In our discussion here, we shall treat the entire chapter as the trespass offering. The word trespass has very much the same meaning in the King James translation as it does in present-day use of the word. We all understand a "No Trespassing" sign. It means we are not to invade the rights of others. Liberty is a word which is much misused and abused today. Many folk go around parading, burning things, destroying things, and talking about liberty. Friend, you are free to swing your fist in any direction that you please, but your liberty ends where my nose begins. A trespass is the invasion of the rights of either God or man.

For example, withholding tithes from God was counted a trespass in Israel. We have the example of Achan who took the accursed thing and this was considered a trespass ([Josh. 7:1](#)).

We must always remember that our trespasses arise out of our sin nature. Man is totally depraved and actually has no capacity for God whatsoever. God makes it very clear that He cannot and will not accept the works of unsaved men to accomplish their salvation. Their righteousness is as filthy rags. He does not save by works of righteousness, but He saves us by His grace. It is impossible for an unsaved man to please God "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" ([Rom. 8:7](#)). When Jesus was on this earth, religious folk came to Him with this question, "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" ([John 6:28-29](#)). The apostles had the same answer, " . . . Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved . . ." ([Acts 16:31](#)).

### **Specific Acts Of Sin Committed In Ignorance (5:1-13)**

The list of sins enumerated here is obviously not an exhaustive list but gives us examples of a limitless number which could be named. These are sins of individuals, not of the entire congregation. Most of the section deals with the remedy and not the disease. So we find the emphasis is upon the type of offering and not on the character of the offerer, as it was in the sin offering.

And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity [[Lev. 5:1](#)].

Let me say again that the four specific sins listed here are merely examples. I think one could fill up the rest of the Book of Leviticus with specific sins if one named them all. I

understand some preacher made up a list of 800 specific sins that he had thought of. He was swamped with letters from people who wanted the list of sins. They thought maybe there was something they were missing since they couldn't think of 800 sins. Well, here we are given a few examples.

"And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing" could be better translated, "if a person sin in this respect that he hears the voice of adjuration." It has to do with the hearing of an oath and being a witness. If a witness has seen or knows something, but he withholds the truth to the detriment of some individual, then that is a sin of omission.

There are sins of omission today. Some folk come into church today thinking their hands are clean because they haven't murdered or stolen. Listen to James: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" ([James 4:17](#)).

Solomon prayed to God concerning this very issue of not telling the truth when a witness ought to tell the truth. "If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness" ([1Kings 8:31-32](#)).

Let me give you an example of this. The town gossip is crossing the square of the town and she sees the president of the bank crossing the street. His secretary is also leaving the bank to go to lunch and a car hits her as she is crossing the street. The bank president rushes over and picks her up in his arms and takes her into a doctor's office. The gossip runs to the telephone to call the wife of the bank president and says, "Do you know, Madge, I saw your husband with another woman in his arms!" Now although that was a fact, it wasn't the whole truth! She is withholding important information. This is a sin of omission.

I was in a meeting of Christian men who were talking about the pastor and they gave certain information that was accurate. But it wasn't the whole truth. They told only a part of it; they didn't tell the whole situation. They were willing to let that group of men believe that they had heard the whole story. That is a trespass. It is one of the most vicious sins that can be committed. Notice here that it is Number One on God's Sin Parade! Over in the Book of Proverbs we find a list of things which God hates and in that list of seven we find "a lying tongue" ([Prov. 6:17](#)).

You remember that Jesus was quiet during most of His trial. We are told that He held His peace. But when He was put under oath, He broke His silence. Then He was no longer dumb like a sheep before her shearers is dumb. ". . . And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" ([Matt. 26:63-64](#)). You see, under oath He did not hold His peace, but spoke out in witness. He told the whole truth.

Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether it be a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of

unclean creeping things, and if it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty [[Lev. 5:2](#)].

This is the law concerning uncleanness. A man might become polluted by contact with a dead animal without being aware of it while others witnessed it. A dead carcase caused uncleanness by contact. Why? Probably for health reasons.

This also speaks to Christians today. We can't be out in the world without becoming unclean by seeing things and hearing things and thinking things. We are unclean. We may not even realize that we have come into contact with the unclean. It may be hidden from us so we are not even aware of it. But we are not to rush into God's presence until we are cleansed. This is why the psalmist says, "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults" ([Ps. 19:12](#)).

We should not only pray for forgiveness in general, we are to name our specific failures to God and ask Him for forgiveness. But more than that, we should pray for forgiveness of sins that we may be unaware of. Sometimes we are unclean and do not realize it.

Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness it be that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty [[Lev. 5:3](#)].

This is similar to the case of the unclean animal, yet God makes a distinction between man and beast. The penalty for this is more severe than for touching the beast ([Lev. 11:24](#) and [Num. 19:11-16](#)). Apparently there were other distinctions of uncleanness concerning man other than death.

Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these [[Lev. 5:4](#)].

Careless speech is involved in this instance. Sometimes we promise to do something, and then we don't do it. We promise that we will serve the Lord. Jephthah is an example of a man promising to do something very rash -- to offer his daughter. Simon Peter boldly declared that he would not deny Christ, but would die defending Him.

Today I hear people making some very rash promises. In fact, I think some of our songs are dynamite, to tell the truth. In our songs we promise to give all to Him, to follow Him, to die for Him. We sing them so glibly that we don't even know what we are singing.

Also I think it is careless speech and presumptuous when we try to demand of God an answer to our prayers. We need always to remember that our prayers are to be in accordance with His will. If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. Where did we get the idea that we could demand anything of God?

"Then he shall be guilty in one of these" refers to the four things which have been listed. Many more could have been included.

And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing:

And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin [[Lev. 5:5-6](#)].

Confession is commanded for the first time. The other offerings were an open admission of guilt. This one has to do with secret sins. They were hidden sins even though they were against God and man.

You remember in [Joshua 7](#), when Achan took the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment, that trespass had to be dealt with publicly because it was that kind of sin. The laying on of hands in the other offerings was evidently an admission of sin. Here confession must come first, then the offering. In the sweet savor offerings, the offerings preceded any thought of confession. The opposite is true here.

I think this is what our Lord had in mind in the Sermon on the Mount. "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" ([Matt. 5:23-24](#)). The believer today is to confess his sin to God privately but he is to make restitution to the injured party.

The trespass offering simply means the offering of guilt. It was a sin offering, since all sin stems from the sin nature. We are not sinners because we sin; we sin because we are sinners with a sin nature.

Since this offering is for an act of sin which is one of the many facets of the sin nature, the value of the offering was not as great as the value of the sin offering in chapter 4.

And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering [[Lev. 5:7](#)].

The emphasis in the trespass offering is not in the character or position of the offerer, but in the sacrifice itself. Two turtledoves were required, as one was for a sin offering and one was for a burnt offering. The person and the work of Christ are represented in the poorest of offerings. This was the sacrifice of the poor. Christ preached glad tidings to the poor.

Notice that it is labeled a sin offering because it arises from the sin nature.

And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first, and wring off his head from his neck, but shall not divide it asunder:

And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it is a sin offering [[Lev. 5:8-9](#)].

Blood must be shed, though the head of the bird was not removed from the body.

And he shall offer the second for a burnt offering, according to the manner: and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him [[Lev. 5:10](#)].

The sinner has complete forgiveness even with the little bird. All of this points to Christ as the one sacrifice.

But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering [[Lev. 5:11](#)].

The poorest of the poor was not left out. If one could not bring a bird, he could bring what amounted to a piece of bread. This sacrifice was still a substitute for him.

Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, even a memorial thereof, and burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: it is a sin offering.

And the priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him: and the remnant shall be the priest's, as a meat offering [[Lev. 5:12-13](#)].

### **Non-specific Acts Of Sin Committed In Ignorance (5:14-19)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering.

And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him [[Lev. 5:14-16](#)].

These trespass offerings emphasize the fact that there has been an invasion of the rights of both God and man. Harm to others is the feature which requires that reparation had to be performed. The principal had to be restored plus a fifth part. This must be what Zacchaeus had in mind when he told the Lord that he would give half his goods to the poor and restore fourfold what he had taken from any man by false accusation ([Luke 19:8](#)).

The chief wrong committed through ignorance seems to apply to robbing God in connection with tithes and offerings. We find this again in Malachi: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation"

([Mal. 3:8-9](#)). The Lord promises them blessing if they will bring their tithes, such blessing that there shall not be room to receive it.

[Ecclesiastes 5:5](#) warns, "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay." For this kind of neglect, this trespass against God, the offering must be valuable. It must be a ram. This points us to Christ, who is precious. "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" ([1Pet. 1:19](#)). Through this offering there was forgiveness for the sinner who committed the trespass in ignorance.

And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.

And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him.

It is a trespass offering: he hath certainly trespassed against the LORD [[Lev. 5:17-19](#)].

This apparently had to do with breaking any of the commandments of God in ignorance. Ignorance of the law is no excuse. This is also true in civil law. In spite of the lack of knowledge of the commandment, the offender was guilty and was held liable. Here again, the ram is given as the only animal for the trespass offering.

This offering in its ritual followed the pattern of the sin offering, except in the sprinkling of the blood, which followed the pattern of the burnt and peace offerings. We will see this in more detail in chapter 7.

## Chapter 6

**THEME:** Conclusion of rules concerning the trespass offering; law concerning the burnt offering; concerning the meal offering; concerning the sin offering

Chapters 6 and 7 present the law of the offerings. Actually, the law of the offerings concerned the priests and their particular part in them and portion of them. It could be called the special rules for the priests who minister at the altar of God.

This section opens with specific directions to the priests and a command for Aaron and his sons. Since the priests served at the altar, they were involved in all of the offerings that were made on the burnt altar. All of this is a shadow of the reality in heaven where Christ, our great High Priest, serves. "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" ([Heb. 8:3-5](#)).

There is another striking feature. Christ is not only the priest but He is also the sacrifice. He offered Himself. "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering often times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" ([Heb. 10:5-12](#)).

We need to be so aware of this today. There are a great many religions which have elaborate rituals with marching and robes and candles and routines. I suppose in all our churches we do a lot of things that really are not worthwhile. God is a Spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. God gave us this great spiritual truth here in the book of Hebrews so that we would see that.

You and I have a High Priest in heaven and He is just as busy as can be. When it says that He sat down, it means that redemption was complete. It is similar to saying that God rested on the seventh day because creation was complete. It doesn't mean that He was tired and stopped doing anything. Just so, the Lord Jesus doesn't sit down because He is tired and doesn't want to do anything. He is busy! He died down here on this earth to save us. He lives up at the right hand of God to keep us saved. You and I ought to keep in touch with Him. This is reality! This is spiritual! The trouble today is that we are out of touch with the living Christ. He is no longer a reality to us.

The greatest compliment I ever heard given about a preacher was for the one whom I succeeded in Nashville, Tennessee. A butcher in the market said to me, "I understand you are following Dr. Allen. You know, there is something about that man. Every time I meet him, I feel like he just left Jesus around the corner." I want to tell you, friends, Dr. Allen meant business with Jesus. Jesus Christ was a reality in his life.

### **Conclusion Of Rules Concerning The Trespass Offering (6:1-7)**

Again, the sins listed are merely examples of a longer list of trespasses which could be given. They are sins committed against one's neighbor in the daily run of affairs.

**And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;

Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein:

Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found.

Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering.

And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest:

And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD: and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein [[Lev. 6:1-7](#)].

This would appear to be a separate revelation from God, distinct from the preceding chapter. It shows that sin against a neighbor is a sin against God. That is why Jesus said, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" ([Matt. 7:12](#)).

Certain specific sins are mentioned here. Lying about borrowed articles and responsibility for articles left for safe keeping are mentioned. We find an example of this in [2Kings 6:5](#) when the students of Elisha lost the borrowed ax. "Fellowship" in this passage actually refers to a business partnership. "Taking by violence" would be a forced transaction such as Ahab taking Naboth's vineyard in [1Kings 21:2-16](#). "Deceiving his neighbor" would mean lying to the neighbor in not reporting having found a lost article.

May I say again, sins against one's fellowman are also sins against God. We see here again that restitution had to be made with an additional penalty of one-fifth added. A fifth would be a double tithe. This was followed by the trespass offering. Again, it is the ram that is the victim. God is showing that He is no respecter of persons.

The trespass offering was vital to the spiritual life of the individual Israelite. "Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour" ([Prov. 14:9](#)). A sense of sin renders Jesus precious to the soul.

### **Law Concerning The Burnt Offering (6:8-13)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: It is the burnt offering because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it [[Lev. 6:8-9](#)].

The fire on the altar was to burn continually, that is, while the tabernacle was set up and not on the wilderness march. The burnt offering was left on the altar all night and the fire was kept burning so that the whole offering would be consumed.

This speaks of the continual consecration of Christ. It was the Lord Jesus who could say, " . . . I do always those things that please him" ([John 8:29](#)). He displays this love and obedience in His high priestly prayer, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" ([John 17:19](#)). Or listen to Him in [John 4:31-32](#): "In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of."

This also speaks of the fact that we are to offer ourselves a living sacrifice to God ([Rom. 12:1-2](#)). I find that when I crawl upon the altar and the fire gets hot, I crawl off. I don't know about you, but I see a lot of folk doing that too. I wish I could say that I always do the things that please Him. The Lord Jesus could say it, but I can't. There is a challenge to every believer today because God delights in the continual obedience of His children. That should give us real food for thought.

Remember that this was the issue when Samuel rebuked King Saul. "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king" ([1Sam. 15:22-23](#)).

Today you and I need to offer our own hearts and lives to Him, if we belong to Him, that is, if we are saved. God forbid that we simply make empty professions. What is it that God wants us to do? " . . . This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" ([John 6:29](#)).

And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.

And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place [[Lev. 6:10-11](#)].

God gave instructions even to the detail of the garment the priest was to wear. He was not only to put on the long robe, which was common to all the priests, but also the linen breeches. Why? The flesh must be covered totally. God is teaching that He cannot accept the works of the flesh.

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" ([Gal. 5:19-21](#)). God cannot accept the works of the flesh. It is only the fruit of the Holy Spirit which is acceptable to Him. The Spirit of God must produce this in our lives. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Gal. 5:22-23](#)).

The priest removed the garments he wore when he removed the ashes, and he put on a fresh suit. This was a continual reminder of the utter pollution of sin. The ashes of the altar spoke primarily of the judgment of sin, and even the ashes were contaminated. They must be taken out and put in a clean place. What a picture this is of the defilement of sin!

And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings.

The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out [[Lev. 6:12-13](#)].

This is another reminder that the fire is to burn continually and is repeated again in [verse 13](#). A fresh supply of wood was to be made in the morning and a burnt offering made for the whole camp. This was the morning sacrifice. The peace offering was then put on the burnt offering.

The continual burning on the altar should remind us that the fire of God burns continually. For those who reject Jesus Christ, this means the fire of God's wrath. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" ([John 3:36](#)).

### **Concerning The Meal Offering (6:14-23)**

And this is the law of the meat offering: the sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, before the altar.

And he shall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat offering, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincense which is upon the meat offering, and shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour, even the memorial of it, unto the LORD [[Lev. 6:14-15](#)].

Again the instructions are directed to the priests. The offerer is a worshiper who stands before the altar rejoicing before God. The priest performs for him.

And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it.

It shall not be baken with leaven. I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire; it is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as the trespass offering [[Lev. 6:16-17](#)].

"With unleavened bread shall it be eaten" is translated in the Septuagint, "unleavened shall it be eaten." The holy place where it was eaten was evidently the outer court of the tabernacle. It was holy because God was there. God's presence makes any place holy. Remember Moses was told to take off his shoes because the ground on which he stood was holy ground ([Exod. 3:5](#)). And Peter says that at the Transfiguration, they were with Him in the holy mount ([2Pet. 1:18](#)).

All the males among the children of Aaron shall eat of it. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations concerning the offerings of

the LORD made by fire: every one that toucheth them shall be holy [Lev. 6:18].

All believers can participate in the enjoyment of the beauties and glories of the holy humanity of our Lord. My friend, you and I need to rejoice in Him more than we do.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

This is the offering of Aaron and of his sons, which they shall offer unto the LORD in the day when he is anointed; the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a meat offering perpetual, half of it in the morning, and half thereof at night.

In a pan it shall be made with oil; and when it is baken, thou shalt bring it in: and the baken pieces of the meat offering shalt thou offer for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

And the priest of his sons that is anointed in his stead shall offer it: it is a statute for ever unto the LORD; it shall be wholly burnt.

For every meat offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt: it shall not be eaten [Lev. 6:19-23].

The priests were not only to eat but also they were to offer a tithe of the meal offering. The priest who received a tenth was in turn to offer a tenth. All of the tithe must be offered. The priests must give as well as receive.

Ministers today should set an example for their congregations in the matter of giving. The offering plate should be passed to the members of the church staff even if they are sitting on the platform during a service. We are all to have a part in giving.

### **Concerning The Sin Offering (6:24-30)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD; it is most holy.

The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place.

But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken: and if it be sodden in a brasen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water.

All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy.

And no sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire [Lev. 6:24-30].

The instructions are again given to the priests. The sin offering, which speaks of the work of Christ on the Cross, was to be offered where the burnt offering was sacrificed. The burnt offering speaks of the person of Christ. Christ must be holy, harmless, and free from sin to be a satisfactory offering for sin. He must be able to save. This is why the virgin birth is essential in the plan of salvation. This is the One who was conceived by the Holy Spirit in a virgin. The sin offering was holy because Christ was free from sin -- though He was made sin for us. It was my sin and your sin that caused Him to die, not His sin. He didn't die simply because He was arrested by the Romans. He could have stepped off this earth at any moment. He told Peter that He could call for legions of angels, if He wished to do so. He was made sin for us and He died in our place.

## Chapter 7

**THEME:** Concerning the trespass offering; concerning the peace offering

The instructions to the priests are continued for these two offerings. These two offerings were more personal than the others. The trespass concerned the individual Israelite, and was not a congregational matter. The peace must finally be enjoyed by the individual in the body of believers.

The emphasis is upon the service of the priest. This is a picture of what the Lord Jesus has done and is doing for us today at God's right hand. He is still girded with the towel of service. He still cleanses. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1John 1:9](#)).

### **Concerning The Trespass Offering (7:1-10)**

Likewise this is the law of the trespass offering: it is most holy.

In the place where they kill the burnt offering shall they kill the trespass offering: and the blood thereof shall be sprinkled round about upon the altar.

And he shall offer of it all the fat thereof; the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards,

And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul that is above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away:

And the priest shall burn them upon the altar for an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a trespass offering.

Every male among the priests shall eat thereof: it shall be eaten in the holy place: it is most holy.

As the sin offering is, so is the trespass offering: there is one law for them: the priest that maketh atonement therewith shall have it [[Lev. 7:1-7](#)].

The ritual of the trespass offering follows the same pattern as that of the sin offering. Although it is for acts of sin, the offerer is reminded that the sacrifice is holy. The worth and merit of Christ cannot be over-emphasized. When we see our sin nature and our

sinful acts in all their enormity and frightfulness, then we shall see the wonder, greatness, and holiness of Christ. My friend, you will never appreciate the Lord Jesus as your Savior until you see yourself as the terrible sinner that you are. I'm not calling you a low-down sinner. That is what the Word of God calls each one of us.

The blood is mentioned but is not emphasized as it is in the sin offering. We are told, however, that there is one law for them. There is a danger that we may tend to make the blood a commonplace thing. It should be dealt with reverently and reticently. It is precious, and we should be on guard that we do not treat that which is precious and holy as if it were commonplace.

And the priest that offereth any man's burnt offering, even the priest shall have to himself the skin of the burnt offering which he hath offered [[Lev. 7:8](#)].

Actually there was one part of the animal that was not burned. It was the skin, and that went to the priest. This speaks of being covered or clothed in the righteousness of Christ. God is satisfied with the Lord Jesus, and He sees us as being in Christ. "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" ([Rom. 3:22](#)). Being clothed in Christ's righteousness is what Jesus referred to in His parable of the wedding feast. The man who entered without being clothed in a wedding garment was bound and cast out ([Matt. 22:11-13](#)).

And all the meat offering that is baken in the oven, and all that is dressed in the fryingpan, and in the pan, shall be the priest's that offereth it.

And every meat offering, mingled with oil, and dry, shall all the sons of Aaron have, one as much as another [[Lev. 7:9-10](#)].

Everything baked in the oven or dressed in the frying pan was to be for the priests. This particular type of meal offering went to the priests in its entirety.

### **Concerning The Peace Offering (7:11-38)**

And this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which he shall offer unto the LORD.

If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried [[Lev. 7:11-12](#)].

The emphasis here is upon the fact that it must be a freewill offering. The reason is for thanksgiving. This has a special meaning for believers. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" ([Heb. 13:15](#)). The fruit of our lips should be giving thanks to His name. Friend, we cannot come to church to worship unless we are prepared to offer the sacrifice of praise to God. A complaining, criticizing Christian is in no position to worship God. How important this is!

Besides the cakes, he shall offer for his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings.

And of it he shall offer one out of the whole oblation for an heave offering unto the LORD, and it shall be the priest's that sprinkleth the blood of the peace offerings [[Lev. 7:13-14](#)].

Notice this very carefully. In [verse 12](#), the cakes and wafers were to be unleavened. In [verse 13](#), the bread was to be leavened. This seems strange. Why should this be when leaven is a principle of evil? It is because in [verse 12](#) it is showing Christ as our peace offering and he is without sin, without leaven. In [verse 13](#), it is the offerer who gives thanks for his participation in the peace. His sins have been forgiven and he has peace with God but there is still evil in him; leaven is still present. Peace with God does not depend on the believer attaining sinless perfection. The leaven is still there. Oh, how important it is to realize this! "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" ([1John 1:8](#)). The believer is to confess his sin for forgiveness and cleansing, then he is to walk by the new nature in the power of the Holy Spirit. "For sin shall not have dominion over you . . ." ([Rom. 6:14](#)). The leavened bread was a heave offering. It was to be elevated toward heaven. Just so, our hearts are to be opened to God for Him to search us and know us and to lead us in the way everlasting ([Ps. 139:23-24](#)).

And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning.

But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow, or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten:

But the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burnt with fire.

And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity [[Lev. 7:15-18](#)].

The peace offering was to be eaten at once. There was to be no delay. Thus, we are to stay very close to Christ for peace of conscience and for power over temptation. My friend, stay close to Christ! He gives peace only to those who are His own, to those who have entered into this glorious, wonderful fellowship with Him. We must look to Him and rest upon Him. When you find that Christ is adequate and wonderful, then the peace of God that passeth all understanding will enter into your heart. What a picture these sacrifices are of the Lord Jesus!

Now I am going to pick some verses out of the rest of the chapter.

And the flesh that toucheth any unclean thing shall not be eaten; it shall be burnt with fire: and as for the flesh, all that be clean shall eat thereof.

But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that pertain unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people [[Lev. 7:19-20](#)].

An unclean person who ate of the peace offering was excommunicated. Even so today, there must be confession of sin on the part of the believer if he is to enter into fellowship with God.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat.

Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings.

Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off from his people [[Lev. 7:22-23,26-27](#)].

We have already discussed the prohibition of eating blood. This is to remind us that man was redeemed by blood and that this is the basis and ground of our acceptance before God. They were also forbidden to eat the fat because the fat belonged to the Lord.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, He that offereth the sacrifice of his peace offerings unto the LORD shall bring his oblation unto the LORD of the sacrifice of his peace offerings.

His own hands shall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire, the fat with the breast, it shall he bring, that the breast may be waved for a wave offering before the LORD.

And the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar: but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'.

And the right shoulder shall ye give unto the priest for an heave offering of the sacrifices of your peace offerings.

He among the sons of Aaron, that offereth the blood of the peace offerings, and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for his part.

For the wave breast and the heave shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel from off the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them unto Aaron the priest and unto his sons by a statute for ever from among the children of Israel [[Lev. 7:28-34](#)].

Aaron, his sons, and the priests received as their portion of the peace offering the breast and the shoulder. The breast speaks of the love of Christ for us. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" ([Rom. 5:8](#)). ". . . who loved me, and gave himself for me" ([Gal. 2:20](#)). ". . . having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" ([John 13:1](#)).

The shoulder speaks of the power and strength of Christ. He is able to save to the uttermost. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one" ([John 10:27-30](#)).

He loves His own with an everlasting love and He can save to the uttermost. This is our portion in Christ!

All of these sacrifices in the Old Testament were not an end in themselves. The Old Testament saint was saved by faith just as we are saved by faith. "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD" ([Ps. 4:5](#)). God was pleased when the sacrifices were brought in faith and in thanksgiving ([Ps. 50:12-15](#) and [Ps. 51:19](#)). God was displeased when the sacrifices were brought as a dull routine and were polluted ([Mal. 1:7-14](#)).

All the sacrifices in the Old Testament demanded a more perfect antitype. This is found in Christ! "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" ([Heb. 9:28](#)).

**This is the portion of the anointing of Aaron, and of the anointing of his sons, out of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, in the day when he presented them to minister unto the LORD in the priest's office;**

**Which the LORD commanded to be given them of the children of Israel, in the day that he anointed them, by a statute for ever throughout their generations.**

**This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings;**

**Which the LORD commanded Moses in mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai [[Lev. 7:35-38](#)].**

God sums up here the instructions given to Aaron and the priests in the law of the offerings of chapters 6 and 7.

## Chapter 8

**THEME:** Calling of the congregation to witness the ritual of consecration of the priests; cleansing of Aaron and his sons; clothing of the high priest; consecration of the high priest; clothing and cleansing of the priests and Aaron; commandments given to Aaron and his sons

We come now to an altogether new section concerning the consecration of the priests. The consecration of the priests is important because it will throw a great deal of light on what is called consecration today in our churches. May I say that much of what we call consecration today is a pretty sorry substitute for the real article. "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore" ([Heb. 7:28](#)).

Our attention is now directed to the priests and not the sacrifices. We leave the brazen altar now and turn to the brazen laver. It was at the brazen altar that God dealt with the sin question for the sinner once and for all. But that doesn't mean that the saved sinner

was perfect. He still sinned, unfortunately; so God must take him to the brazen laver where He washed him and kept him clean.

God still washes us and keeps us clean at the brazen laver. Jesus Christ is still girded with that towel of service and He washes us in the brazen laver of His blood and that keeps on cleansing us from all sin.

Israel had a priesthood and this was written for them. In fact, the Book of Leviticus really is written for the Levites. It was God's original intention to make the entire nation of Israel a kingdom of priests. "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation . . ." ([Exod. 19:6](#)). Their sin in the matter of the golden calf prevented this. Instead, only one tribe was taken, the tribe of Levi. Out of this tribe only one man was chosen as the high priest and that was Aaron.

The church today is a priesthood, and Christ is the great High Priest. " . . . We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" ([Heb. 8:1](#)). "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" ([1Pet. 2:9](#)). "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" ([Rev. 5:10](#)). "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" ([Rev. 1:6](#)). "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle" ([Heb. 13:10](#)). That altar today is in heaven. It is at the throne of grace.

In the future, after the church is gone, I believe that the nation Israel will be the priests on the earth during the Millennium.

The definition of a priest was not left to man's invention but is explained in the Scripture. "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins" ([Heb. 5:1](#)). Priesthood in the Scriptures bears no similarity to any order of priests in any religion at the present time.

A priest is one who represents man before God. He goes in to God on behalf of man. He is the opposite of a prophet. A prophet comes out from God, to speak for God, to man. A priest comes out from man and goes to God, to speak for man to God, and to represent man.

You can see that the Lord Jesus is both Prophet and Priest. He came out from God and spoke for God to man. He reveals God to man. Now He has gone from man back to God and is our great High Priest. He represents us there. In fact, we are in Him! My friend, if you are not in Him, then you are not up there. You and I could never get there on our own.

A knowledge of the tabernacle is essential to an understanding of the Book of Leviticus and especially of the priesthood. The typology of the tabernacle and of the priesthood is so rich in meaning and detail that there is a danger of emphasizing one facet to the exclusion of another and thereby giving a wrong inference. I do think we need to note that the outer court of the tabernacle represents the world down here. This is where Christ bled and died. The Holy Place is the unseen to which our great High Priest has gone.

Actually, this is what happened when the Lord Jesus died on the Cross and then went back up to heaven. He took the tabernacle and the meaning of it, which was horizontal here on the earth, and He made it perpendicular. That is, the altar is down here -- this is where He died on the Cross. The Holy Place is up there, and He is even now in the Holy of Holies. Listen to these passages which explain this. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession" ([Heb. 4:14](#)). "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building" ([Heb. 9:11](#)). "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" ([Heb. 8:1-2](#)). "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" ([Heb. 9:23-24](#)).

He is up yonder today. I wish we could bring this reality into our faith. We attend church and go through a little ritual and often the realities of our faith are forgotten. He is up yonder, friend, right now. You are to approach God through Him. We are told to come with boldness. He appears now in the presence of God for us. My friend, you are not alone down here. There is availability with God through Christ. The tabernacle is now perpendicular and the Holy of Holies is in heaven.

Twelve times in this chapter it is stated that the Lord commanded Moses. The final clincher is the last verse, "So Aaron and his sons did all things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses" ([Lev. 8:36](#)). These are the things which God commanded. Consecration must be the way He says it is to be done!

Some people believe in a late dating of the Book of Leviticus as the invention of the priesthood. Yet it says here that this was all done as God commanded it. Do you believe in the inspired Word of God? Then you cannot accept the late dating of Leviticus, but believe the inerrancy of Scripture and that this was done at the command of God.

### **Calling Of The Congregation To Witness The Ritual (8:1-5)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread;

And gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation [[Lev. 8:1-3](#)].

Moses is commanded to bring Aaron and his sons, with all the articles which are to be used in the consecration of the priests, to the door of the tabernacle. This sounds somewhat like a grocery list, but every item it mentions is very important.

Then he is to gather the congregation together to witness the ritual of consecrating the priests. This is to be a very impressive service. They will see that God takes feeble men

and sets them aside for His service. I feel like saying a hallelujah to that because He will do that for you and for me. "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore" ([Heb. 7:28](#)). Christ was really consecrated. In a sense no one else is really consecrated. But the marvelous thing is that God will accept men with infirmities. If He demanded perfection, we would all be left out. Thank God, He takes them as they are, infirm.

And Moses did as the Lord commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done [[Lev. 8:4-5](#)].

Moses does what he is commanded to do. The people likewise obey and come together for this service. Moses gives a word of explanation that he is following the instructions of the Lord in all that he does.

### **Cleansing Of Aaron And His Sons (8:6)**

And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water [[Lev. 8:6](#)].

Moses brings Aaron and his sons to the laver for washing. He gives them a bath, if you please. This signifies that they are to be holy, pure, and clean if they are to serve the Lord. They have already been to the altar for forgiveness, but they need cleansing.

A great many people today say that they are qualified for service because they are saved. Now it is true that salvation is the prime requisite, but for service one must also be cleansed. You must be cleansed to be used! Listen to these verses from Scripture:

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:5](#)). "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" ([Heb. 10:22](#)). "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" ([Eph. 5:26](#)). "Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all" ([John 13:10](#)). "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1John 1:9](#)).

The Holy Ghost renews us as we go along, but we need a washing from the Lord. With what does He wash us? What is the cleansing agent? It is the Word of God. That is what cleanses us. The Lord said that His disciples needed to be washed because their feet were dirty. They all had a bath; that is, they all had been saved (except Judas), but they still needed their feet washed so that they might have fellowship with Him. This cleansing is for service.

How do we get that washing? It is by confession that we are forgiven and cleansed. Do you want to be used of God? Then go confess your sins, dear Christian. That is the first

step. This is God's way. This is His command. We either must do it His way or we cannot be of service. He has His way of doing things and we need to learn and obey His ways.

### **Clothing Of The High Priest (8:7-9)**

And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith [Lev. 8:7].

The clothing of the high priest is a picture of our great High Priest in all His extraordinary graces and glory. Each article of clothing was symbolic. There were eight articles worn by the high priest. Four were the same or similar to those worn by all the priests. Four were peculiar to him, and separated him from the other priests. They were garments for glory and for beauty.

The four which were common to all the priests were as follows: the coat, the girdle, the turban or mitre or bonnet, and the breeches. These were all made of white linen, with the exception of the turban. The white linen speaks of righteousness. Every believer is clothed in the righteousness of Christ. It is essential for service to be thus clothed, and to be girded is necessary for active obedience. The coat and girdle mentioned in this verse were the basic garments which all the priests wore. These garments are described in detail in [Exodus 28](#).

And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim [Lev. 8:8].

The breastplate is also described in [Exodus 28](#). The Urim and Thummim were placed in the breastplate. Urim means "light" and Thummim means "perfections," so these were the lights and perfections. I do not know exactly how they functioned. Some think that they had to do with the Law and that possibly the Law was written on stones. In [Psalm 19](#) there is a reference to this. "The law of the LORD is perfect, [perfections -- Thummim], converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" ([Ps. 19:7](#)). "The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes [light -- Urim]" ([Ps. 19:8](#)). Apparently the Urim and Thummim had something to do with determining the will of God. There is a spiritual application for us. We need the Word of God today, and we need the leading of God to determine the will of God in our lives.

And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses [Lev. 8:9].

The mitre of the high priest had put upon it the golden crown described in [Exodus 28](#). Remember that graven upon it was HOLINESS TO THE LORD. These garments distinguished the high priest from the other priests. They set forth the glories and beauties of our great High Priest who died down here to save us and lives at God's right hand to keep us saved. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" ([Rom. 5:10](#)). ". . . because I live, ye shall live also" ([John 14:19](#)).

The sons of Aaron were at his side clothed in simple linen. This is a picture of our great High Priest with His many sons who are being gathered with Him and who are clothed in His righteousness. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" ([Heb. 2:10](#)). We come to Christ as lost sinners and He covers us with His righteousness.

The priest carried stones on each shoulder with six of the names of the twelve tribes on each shoulder. The twelve stones on the breastplate had a name of each of the tribes on each, one tribe on each stone. The great high priest carried the nation of Israel on his shoulder and upon his heart. The shoulder speaks of strength and the heart speaks of love.

### **Consecration Of The High Priest (8:10-12)**

[And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them \[Lev. 8:10\].](#)

The tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry had been sprinkled with blood ([Heb. 9:21](#)). Now they are anointed with oil. They were already redeemed and cleansed by the blood. Now they are anointed with the oil which symbolizes the Holy Spirit. Now the Holy Spirit is free to move and work in the worship and service of the tabernacle. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" ([John 4:24](#)).

[And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.](#)

[And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him \[Lev. 8:11-12\].](#)

The act of sprinkling the oil speaks of sanctification. All was now ready for use, having been set apart for the service of God. Aaron was not sprinkled but anointed with the oil. He was just covered with oil! "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments" ([Ps. 133:2](#)).

Just so the Holy Spirit (of whom oil is the symbol) was poured out upon Christ at His baptism. It is distinctly stated that ". . . God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" ([John 3:34](#)). In other words, God gives the Holy Spirit to His Son without measure.

It must be noted that the oil was poured on Aaron before the priests had the blood applied to them. Our High Priest needed no offering for sin. We do; He did not. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" ([Heb. 1:9](#)).

### **Clothing Of The Priests (8:13)**

[And Moses brought Aaron's sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and put bonnets upon them; as the LORD commanded Moses \[Lev. 8:13\].](#)

We are told again that this was all done according to the commandment of the Lord. This reminds us once more that we must stand clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

## Cleansing Of The Priests And Aaron (8:14-30)

And he brought the bullock for the sin offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin offering [[Lev. 8:14](#)].

The bullock was the sin offering for the high priest. The four sons of Aaron could claim it as their offering, too. Their sins are transferred to the victim. That is understood by the laying on of hands. God wrote indelibly in their souls and burned it into their hearts that they were sinners, even though they were in the service of God.

You will find as you go through the Word of God that God's men have always been conscious of the fact that they are sinners. "For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me" ([Ps. 40:12](#)). Friend, do you feel that you are that kind of a sinner? God can do something for you if you are like that. After all, if you don't get sick enough to go to the doctor, you won't go to him. If you aren't sure that you are a real sinner, you are not apt to go to Christ. "For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" ([Ps. 38:4](#)).

Friends, if you have a load that is too heavy for you, get someone else to carry it for you. There is Someone who says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest. I'll take your burdens." And don't try to fool God. He knows all about you; so you might just as well tell Him the whole story.

And he slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it.

And he took all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moses burned it upon the altar.

But the bullock, and his hide, his flesh, and his dung, he burnt with fire without the camp as the LORD commanded Moses [[Lev. 8:15-17](#)].

This ritual is meaningless until we understand the spiritual lesson. They follow the ritual of the sin offering with the exception that the blood is put on the horns of the brazen altar rather than on the golden altar. Even the altar which is used for the bloody sacrifices must be dedicated with blood. This is to remind us that there is no merit in the wood of the cross. There are a lot of people today who feel there is some merit in the cross itself. There is no merit in the cross! The merit is in the One who shed His blood for us there. Though He became sin for us, He was not polluted with sin. He was not stained with sin. He was "made sin" and yet He was "separate from sinners." Again, we notice that all this was done at the commandment of God.

And he brought the ram for the burnt offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.

And he killed it; and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.

And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burnt the head, and the pieces, and the fat.

And he washed the inwards and the legs in water; and Moses burnt the whole ram upon the altar: it was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses [[Lev. 8:18-21](#)].

They now go through the ritual of the burnt offering. The burnt offering followed the sin offering. It is impossible to comprehend the beauties and merits of Christ until the sin question has been dealt with in a manner satisfactory to God. The sin offering represents what Christ did for us on the Cross. The burnt offering represents who He is. You can never really know Him until you come to Him first to save you and you accept Him as your substitute for sin. He paid the penalty for your sin. That is of prime importance to know.

Actually, fellowship in the New Testament means to share the things of Christ. Only those who are the blood-bought believers can share the things of Christ. The priests had to go inside the holy place to see the beauties of that place. The outside was not very pretty. Just so, the unbelieving world does not see the beauty of Christ and rejects Him, but the child of God is finding new beauties and glories in Him every day.

And he brought the other ram, the ram of consecration: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.

And he slew it; and Moses took of the blood of it, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.

And he brought Aaron's sons and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about [[Lev. 8:22-24](#)].

The ram of consecration was actually a trespass offering. No peace offerings were made. Why not? Because the priests were already in the sanctuary, the place of fellowship and communion.

The blood-tipped ear symbolizes the ear that will hear the voice of God. Without that, friend, you are not going to hear Him. The natural man does not receive the things of Christ. The blood-tipped hand was essential for service. It is impossible to serve the Lord before one is saved. The blood-tipped foot was essential for the walk before God. All of this is symbolic of the fact that the total personality must be presented to God.

And he took the fat, and the rump, and all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right shoulder:

And out of the basket of unleavened bread, that was before the LORD, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled bread,

and one wafer, and put them on the fat, and upon the right shoulder:

And he put all upon Aaron's hands, and upon his sons' hands, and waved them for a wave offering before the LORD.

And Moses took them from off their hands, and burnt them on the altar upon the burnt offering: they were consecrations for a sweet savour: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

And Moses took the breast, and waved it for a wave offering before the LORD: for of the ram of consecration it was Moses' part; as the LORD commanded Moses [[Lev. 8:25-29](#)].

These verses tell that they took parts from all the offerings and put them together and placed them in the hands of Aaron and his sons. They then waved them before the Lord. This was total commitment to God on the basis of the value of one offering. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" ([Heb. 9:28](#)).

And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him [[Lev. 8:30](#)].

Now the priests together with Aaron are consecrated with blood and oil. Blood is for the forgiveness of sins, the work of Christ; the oil is for the anointing of the Spirit of God. (The instructions for this were given in [Exodus 29:21](#).) This speaks of the Lord Jesus who said, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" ([John 17:19](#)).

This should also remind us that believers are to walk before the world as the blood-bought children of God. This is what Jude meant: "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" ([Jude 1:23](#)). You see, we can go through consecration services and make promises of consecration, but the real question is what your neighbors think about you. What do the folk where you go to school think of you? Do the people with whom you work think that you are serving God? Do they think you are consecrated?

I heard a wonderful thing about a Christian the other day. An unsaved man said, "I don't know much about that fellow's religion, but if I ever get religion, I want his kind." I'm afraid that too often what the world sees of the Christian is not really very appealing. Our life should be so that it would attract the man out in the world to the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Commandments Given To Aaron And His Sons (8:31-36)**

And Moses said unto Aaron and to his sons, Boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and there eat it with the bread that is in the basket of consecrations, as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it.

And that which remaineth of the flesh and of the bread shall ye burn with fire [[Lev. 8:31-32](#)].

I told you at the beginning of this section that this sounds like a grocery list, and this is how this section on consecration ends. They are to eat the food that is left. This typifies the fact that believers are now to feed upon the finished work of Christ. Peace and satisfaction are the portion of the believers only in ratio to the measure in which they feed on Christ. Nothing is to be left. All must be consumed or burnt with fire. Nothing is to be left to spoil or waste. Oh, how God's people need to feed upon Him!

And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall he consecrate you.

As he hath done this day, so the LORD hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you.

Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, that ye die not: for so I am commanded.

So Aaron and his sons did all things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses [[Lev. 8:33-36](#)].

There were to be seven days of consecration and meditation. They were to remain continually on duty at the door of the tabernacle. So it is with our great High Priest who ever lives to make intercession for His own. You may wake up [Acts 2:00](#) A.M., and He is right up there for you. You may be out in a difficult and dark place, but He is right up there for you. He is always available!

All this was done at the commandment of God. This is emphasized, as it is repeated in each of the last three verses of this chapter. The reason for this will be made clear in the next chapter.

## Chapter 9

**THEME:** Aaron prepares to begin his service; Aaron offers the sin offering; Aaron offers the burnt offering; Aaron offers the meal and peace offerings; Aaron blesses the people and the glory of the Lord appears

This chapter is intensely interesting, as it not only marks the initiation of Aaron and his sons into the service of the priesthood, but it gives in detail the daily ritual of the service of the priests. With the exception of the great Day of Atonement, very little detail is given in the remainder of Scripture relative to the daily ritual.

This marks the time when the priest for the first time became a priest. Although one was born in Aaron's line, he was not fully a priest until he was consecrated. The Hebrew word for consecration literally means "to fill the hand." That means we come to God with empty hands. Consecration isn't a promise to go out as a missionary or to do something else for the Lord. Consecration means to come to the Lord with empty hands and ask, "Lord, what will You have me to do?" He does the filling! That is consecration.

Too many folk think they must bring something to God if they are to be consecrated. Some folk seem to think they are giving the Lord a whole lot if they give themselves. We're not giving Him very much, friends. When He got me, all He got was just so much sin. That's all.

The Septuagint adopted the Greek word teleioo to express consecration. This expresses the same thought. Telos means "end," and it means "the purpose," meaning to accomplish what God wants you to accomplish. It means to fulfill the end for which you were born. We were born for the purpose of completing the body of Christ. And He was born for the purpose of coming down here to accomplish the will of God in order that He might bring us home to glory. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" ([Heb. 2:10](#)). You see, Jesus was consecrated. He had a purpose. "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore" ([Heb. 7:28](#)).

In this chapter it is the office of Jesus, not His character, which is in view. It is Jesus accomplishing the purpose, the God-given purpose, in His office.

### **Aaron Prepares To Begin His Service (9:1-7)**

And it came to pass on the eighth day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel;

And he said unto Aaron, Take thee a young calf for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer them before the LORD [[Lev. 9:1-2](#)].

All of this was done at the commandment of God. They had carried out the details of the seven days and now, on the eighth day, Aaron was to begin his service as the high priest. The eighth day is the first day of the week! That is the day that Jesus came back from the dead. Christ entered into His office as High Priest after His death and resurrection.

[Hebrews 8:4](#) and [Hebrews 9:10-12](#) tell us that if Christ were on earth, He would not be a priest. It was after He ascended into heaven that He became High Priest in the tabernacle not made with hands, up in heaven. By His own blood He entered into the Holy Place.

As Aaron entered into his office as high priest on the first day of the week, his four sons were there as witnesses. Likewise, we have four Gospels which bear witness to the fact of the death and resurrection of Christ. We today have a perfect and complete Priest. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" ([Heb. 5:9](#)). We obey Him when we believe Him and believe on Him. We obey Him, after we are believers, when we attempt to do His will. That is consecration, friends. We come to him empty; we hold out our empty hands and ask Christ to fill us.

Aaron was not our great High Priest. He needed to make a sin offering for himself. The high priest on all great public occasions began by making an offering for himself. By this he was declaring that he was not the Christ but that there would be One who comes after him. He would be the great High Priest -- "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" ([Heb. 7:27](#)).

And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin offering; and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt offering;

Also a bullock and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before the LORD; and a meat offering mingled with oil: for today the LORD will appear unto you [[Lev. 9:3-4](#)].

Aaron was commanded to have the people bring all the offerings to God with the exception of the trespass offering. At the very beginning there was no need for the trespass offering because they had not had time to commit a trespass. They offered the regular kid of the goats for the sin offering; a double offering of a calf and a lamb for the burnt offering; a double offering of a bullock and a ram for the peace offering; and the regular meal offering. The glory of the Lord was to appear to them that day. This was to show that through the death of Christ, on to the resurrected High Priest at God's right hand, is the way we approach God.

And they brought that which Moses commanded before the tabernacle of the congregation: and all the congregation drew near and stood before the LORD.

And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commanded that ye should do: and the glory of the LORD shall appear unto you.

And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded [[Lev. 9:5-7](#)].

The people obey, and Moses assures them that the glory of the Lord will appear to them.

### **Aaron Offers The Sin Offering (9:8-11)**

Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself.

And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and he dipped his finger in the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar.

But the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver of the sin offering, he burnt upon the altar; as the LORD commanded Moses.

And the flesh and the hide he burnt with fire without the camp [[Lev. 9:8-11](#)].

These verses describe how Aaron carried out the ritual of the sin offering in meticulous detail. The sin offering was made first. Why? When the offerings were first presented, the burnt offering was first and the sin offering came last. Well, you see, the offerings were first presented from God's viewpoint. But now we are approaching God from man's viewpoint. Man comes to God as a sinner. You and I, my friend, come as sinners. It is the sin question which must be settled first. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" ([Eph. 1:7](#)).

## **Aaron Offers The Burnt Offering (9:12-16)**

The ritual for the burnt offering was followed in meticulous detail. First Aaron offered for himself.

And he slew the burnt offering: and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled round about upon the altar.

And they presented the burnt offering unto him, with the pieces thereof, and the head: and he burnt them upon the altar.

And he did wash the inwards and the legs, and burnt them upon the burnt offering on the altar [[Lev. 9:12-14](#)].

The sin offering and the burnt offering for the people were then presented.

And he brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first.

And he brought the burnt offering, and offered it according to the manner [[Lev. 9:15-16](#)].

All of this is a picture of Christ. "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand" ([Isa. 53:10](#)). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" ([2Cor. 5:21](#)).

The sin offering is made sin. Christ had the sin of the world pressed down upon Him as one great globe, a whole world, of sin.

## **Aaron Offers The Meal And Peace Offerings (9:17-21)**

And he brought the meat offering, and took an handful thereof, and burnt it upon the altar, beside the burnt sacrifice of the morning.

He slew also the bullock and the ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings, which was for the people: and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled upon the altar round about,

And the fat of the bullock and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth the inwards, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver:

And they put the fat upon the breasts, and he burnt the fat upon the altar:

And the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron waved for a wave offering before the LORD; as Moses commanded [[Lev. 9:17-21](#)].

The meal offering followed the regular ritual. The same is true for the peace offering. Aaron, as the representative for the nation, presents the sacrifices before the Lord through the shedding of the blood. The people are accepted. Blessing will follow.

## **Aaron Blesses The People And The Glory Of The Lord Appears (9:22-24)**

And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings.

And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.

And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces [[Lev. 9:22-24](#)].

Blessing follows the offering of the three offerings: the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offering. Then Moses and Aaron retired into the tabernacle. It is thought that at the time of the evening sacrifice they came forth to bless the people and then the glory of the Lord appeared. All is complete now. The people shout and fall on their faces in adoration and praise.

Christ is now entered into the Holy Place, which is in heaven itself, to appear there for you and me today. Oh, my friend, lay hold of this living Christ. Fall before Him in adoration and praise.

## **Chapter 10**

**THEME:** Incident concerning Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron; instructions coming out of the incident; injunctions concerning the offerings in connection with the incident

The Book of Leviticus has very little narrative, but is filled with instructions, rituals, regulations, and laws. This chapter offers a change of pace in the reading for it is a narrative. However, the interest is almost obliterated because it is a horrible tragedy which is recorded here.

This is another blot on man's long and sordid history of sin and willfulness. It is the record of the rebellion and disobedience of the two sons of Aaron. It follows the glorious day of dedication recorded in the preceding chapter. So often we find this happening. After a flush of victory, there is defeat -- as in the Book of Joshua, the victory of Jericho is followed by the ignoble defeat of Ai.

The presumption of Nadab and Abihu is frightening in the light of the clear teaching which God gave at Sinai. "And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them" ([Exod. 19:22](#)). In [Exodus 30:34-38](#) God gave to Moses the formula for the incense to be used in the tabernacle and said, "As for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people" ([Exod. 30:37-38](#)).

The holiness of God is set forth at the beginning of the age of law by this incident. The holiness of God is set forth at the beginning of the age of grace by the incident concerning Ananias and Sapphira. Death was the drastic penalty in both cases. Our God is holy, and He deals with His children on that level. "For our God is a consuming fire" ([Heb. 12:29](#)) is something we all need to learn today. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men . . ." ([2Cor. 5:11](#)). This is something we need to recognize today.

There is a warning in [Hebrews 12:25](#): "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." This is one of the great sins of the hour. People are not hearing what God has to say in His Word.

### **Incident Concerning Nadab And Abihu, Sons Of Aaron (10:1-5)**

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.

And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD [[Lev. 10:1-2](#)].

It may be argued that the penalty of death was too severe for the transgression committed. But notice particularly what God says here, "Which he commanded them not." This reveals something of the enormity for the crime, and therefore the penalty is just. This was willful and deliberate disobedience to the expressed command of God.

Precisely what did they do which brought down such severe judgment upon them? This act has been called "will-worship" and that is what it is. What did they do wrong? I'd like to make three suggestions:

1. They probably did not light the censer of incense from coals from off the altar, which was the fire which had come down from heaven. It apparently was understood that this must be done. This was the practice on the great Day of Atonement as is clearly stated in [Leviticus 16:12](#): "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil." This was the same ritual followed at the time of the rebellion of Korah ([Num. 16:46](#)). It must be assumed that this method was the only correct one. The ritual they followed was contrary to God's way.

2. Their timing was out of step with the God-given ritual. The ritual for the day had been completed. They should have consulted Aaron in this matter. Apparently, they wanted to repeat the marvelous display of the preceding chapter. Isn't this a problem today, when with our will-worship we try to duplicate what God has done? There are many who try to duplicate the experience of the day of Pentecost. God is sovereign! His will must be followed even as to the timing. The Spirit of God will move according to His own will. We should simply make ourselves available and obedient to Him.

3. Others have supposed that they intruded beyond the veil which was expressly forbidden. There is justification for their viewpoint as stated in [Leviticus 16:1-2](#): "And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died; and the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy

brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat."

It would seem that this prohibition came out of the incident of Nadab and Abihu. They were wrong as to the place they should come. God had commanded them as to the manner, the time, and the place. They were wrong in all three.

Some may still think that God surely uses extreme surgery. It does reveal that our God is a jealous God. He is sovereign in all His dealings, and those who come to Him must come on His terms. It is still true that to obey is better than sacrifice. God will not accept worship in our own will, no matter how sincere. We need to note here, too, that the high position of these men offered them no immunity.

The sudden execution of judgment here is startling. There is no escaping the statement that the fire was from the Lord. Let us recognize that judgment is not foreign to the age of grace. It may not always be this sudden. "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" ([1Cor. 11:30](#)). In the case of Ananias and Sapphira it was just as sudden and sure.

This does not mean that the believer in Christ can lose his salvation! Nadab and Abihu, and Ananias and Sapphira did not lose their salvation. Neither did the believers in the Corinthian congregation. This is made very clear. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" ([1Cor. 11:31-32](#)).

Physical death is oftentimes a judgment for the child of God. There is a sin unto death ([1John 5:16](#)) but it is physical death. The child of God is not condemned with the world. These judgments in both the Old and New Testaments are examples to believers that will-worship is detestable to God. The believer must come to God in God's way. The believing sinner must worship God's way.

[Hebrews 10:19-22](#) tells us very definitely that we are to come to God with boldness, but that it must be by the blood of Jesus. We come because we have a High Priest over the house of God. We are to come ". . . with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." God makes a difference! "And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean" ([Lev. 10:10](#)). Don't get the idea that God can't move in with judgment today.

Let me get very personal. A friend of mine, who knows me very well, said, "McGee, since you have had cancer and you know you still have cancer in your body now, did it ever occur to you that maybe it is a judgment from God?" I told this brother, "You know, I have waked up in the stillness and darkness of the night and I've thought just that, and I have cried out to God." May I say to you, I don't exclude myself. If we don't judge ourselves, God will judge us, so that we are not condemned with the world! God does all things well! When I say these things to you, remember that I am going through it. This fellow knows what he is talking about.

What an illustration this is that sometimes Jesus will come in fiery judgment upon the lost world. Enoch preached this! Enoch prophesied, ". . . Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" ([Jude 1:14-15](#)). Peter said the same thing. "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" ([1Pet. 4:18](#)).

Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said [[Lev. 10:3-5](#)].

When the news spread throughout the hosts of Israel, the people must have gathered about the tabernacle to view the dead bodies of these young men. Moses quoted the words of the Lord to give them an explanation for the judgment. "And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them" ([Exod. 19:22](#)).

Those who have been brought into a particular nearness to God must exercise a sharp insight into the holiness and the righteous demands of God. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" ([Amos 3:2](#)). As God judged His people Israel, so God judges His saints today in order that the world may know He is a holy God.

Aaron's attitude and conduct are noticeable. He maintains a demeanor of silence. There is no cry of disappointment, grief, or resentment toward God. He bows in heartbroken submission to the will of God. His grief must have been deep, but he can say nothing against the sovereign will of God. You notice God says, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me."

Moses called upon two of the priests who were cousins of the slain men to remove the dead bodies from before the sanctuary. As the people looked on in awe, they were carried out of the camp.

### **Instructions Coming Out Of The Incident (10:6-11)**

And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.

And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses [[Lev. 10:6-7](#)].

A restriction is placed on Aaron and his two remaining sons. They were not to mourn outwardly. There is a twofold reason for this. The first is clearly stated, "the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you." They were set aside to represent the people before God, and they were God's representatives before the people. They were to continue in their office that there might be a mediator between God and man, lest wrath should come upon the people and the judgment of death be upon them. In the second place, they were not to show the outward signs of mourning which would contradict the action of God in judging their loved ones. It must be added that they must have gone about their office with sad hearts. They were serving God and there must be no evidence of rebellion against Him.

And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying,

Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations [[Lev. 10:8-9](#)].

It would appear from this instruction that Nadab and Abihu had acted under the influence of alcohol. This is one of the finest examples in Scripture against the use and abuse of alcohol or drugs. The priest is to serve the Lord with a clear, steady, and sober mind. Today we have the advocates of the use of drugs in religion. My friend, God despises such an approach to Him. This is the same thing that Paul meant when he said, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" ([Eph. 5:18](#)). The believer is to draw his dynamic and his zeal from the Spirit of the Lord and not from frail and human props. What a lesson this is against drugs and alcohol for us today.

And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;

And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses [[Lev. 10:10-11](#)].

The use of wine dulls the senses so that a sharp distinction cannot be made between the holy and the unholy. True values are distorted and there is a breakdown in morals as a result of the use and abuse of alcohol. The priest must keep the statutes of the Lord so that he can teach them to the people. It is the filling of the Holy Spirit that is needed for the study and the teaching of the Word of God.

### **Injunctions Concerning The Offerings (10:12-20)**

And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left, Take the meat offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it without leaven beside the altar: for it is most holy:

And ye shall eat it in the holy place, because it is thy due, and thy sons' due, of the sacrifices of the LORD made by fire: for so I am commanded.

And the wave breast and heave shoulder shall ye eat in a clean place; thou, and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee: for they be

thy due, and thy sons' due, which are given out of the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel.

The heave shoulder and the wave breast shall they bring with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave it for a wave offering before the LORD; and it shall be thine, and thy sons' with thee, by a statute for ever; as the LORD hath commanded [[Lev. 10:12-15](#)].

Moses repeats the commandments which concern both the meal offering and the peace offering. A portion of the offering was to be eaten by them in the holy place. This evidently is the outer court beside the burnt altar. It is holy because it was set aside for the service of God. The wave breast and the heave shoulder should be eaten in a clean place. Apparently they could take this to eat in their homes which would be ceremonially clean.

And Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin offering, and, behold, it was burnt: and he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron which were left alive, saying,

Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?

Behold, the blood of it was not brought in within the holy place: ye should indeed have eaten it in the holy place, as I commanded [[Lev. 10:16-18](#)].

Now here is another tragic incident with action contrary to the will of God. We find failure on the part of the two other sons of Aaron, but here it is a sin of omission. It was not a deliberate and willful sin, as was that of the two dead sons. The sin offering was to be eaten in the holy place and that had not been done. Although the blood had been offered, the portion that belonged to the priests had not been eaten. They had omitted doing this, possibly not realizing the importance of it.

And Aaron said unto Moses, Behold, this day have they offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD; and such things have befallen me: and if I had eaten the sin offering to day, should it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?

And when Moses heard that, he was content [[Lev. 10:19-20](#)].

Aaron assumed responsibility for his sons. Apparently the tragic incident had caused not only a loss of appetite but also a feeling of unworthiness in continuing to serve before God. Moses was satisfied with the explanation. I think at this point old Aaron felt like resigning.

There is tremendous truth for us to draw from this incident. These men came to God on their own. They were willful and this was blasphemy. God judged them. People today ask me whether it is wrong for them to belong to a church which denies the deity of Christ. Friends, do you think anyone can come to God in such a place, apart from God's will and God's terms? If God struck today as He struck Nadab and Abihu, I think half the church members would be dead. The liberals would be struck for denying the deity of Christ and

the forgiveness of His sacrifice for us. Many fundamental church members would be struck down like Ananias and Sapphira for their hypocrisy, their lying to the Holy Spirit. God is dealing in mercy today, giving time for repentance and for men to come to the knowledge of the truth. Otherwise many people would be struck dead.

There is a wonderful lesson for you and for me. When we come to God, we must come on His terms. This is not an arrangement which we can make. We are not making the rules. God is the One who saves and He is the One who says how we shall be saved. Jesus Christ says that no man comes to the Father but by Him.

## Chapter 11

**THEME:** The food of God's people -- clean and unclean animals; contact with carcasses of unclean animals; contact with carcasses of clean animals; contamination of creeping creatures; classification of clean and unclean made by a holy God

This is a most unusual chapter. We have come now to a radical bifurcation in this book. The subject matter is changed from the priests to the people; from offerings to God to food for man; from worship before God to the walk in this world. The change is made from the sacred to the secular without any change of pace or level. There is no thought that this is anything different.

Today we make a false distinction between the sacred and the secular. We think if it is in the church it is sacred. Even gossip in the church seems to be regarded as sacred (especially if it is couched as a prayer request!). If gossip is outside the church, then it is secular. Friend, all and any of our work can be done to the glory of God. Someone has said,

I want to dig a ditch so straight and true

That God can look it through.

Friends, you cannot make a distinction between the sacred and the secular. God moves right out here from that which we would call sacred to that which we would call secular, and He makes no distinction.

This chapter is so unusual because God gives a diet, a menu, for the children of Israel to follow. They are to eat certain things and they are not to eat the things which God keeps off the menu. So here is the important question: Could the God of this vast universe be interested in what His creatures have for dinner? Could the One who orders all of creation prepare a menu for man? This chapter gives the answer: God was and is interested in the details of the lives of His people. No detail is too minute to escape His interest and His concern.

A lady asked G. Campbell Morgan whether he thought we ought to pray to God about the little things in our lives. His answer was, "Madam, can you mention anything in your life that is big to God?" You see, we tend to divide things in our lives as big problems and little problems. They are not divided that way before God. They are all little problems to

Him. Yet nothing is too small for His attention and care. There are so many injunctions to us to pray about everything, to worry about nothing.

There are great spiritual lessons for us in this section, as we shall see; but there is also a very real and practical aspect which, because it pertained to Israel, we sometimes ignore. Since God forbade the eating of certain animals and permitted the eating of others, it must be assumed that there was a health factor involved. They could eat certain animals, fish, and birds, but not others. It was not a superstition and it was more than a religious rite to make a distinction between clean and unclean animals. Since God prescribed certain animals for the diet of His people, and since He definitely forbade others, there must be some benefit in following that diet. History should demonstrate that God had good and sufficient grounds for making His distinctions. Now it is true that God could have acted in an arbitrary fashion in setting up these lines of separation between clean and unclean, but, ordinarily, God acted for the good of His people. Does history show this to be the case in these matters?

Well, the interesting thing we will find is that the animals which were forbidden to be eaten were largely unclean feeders. The animals rejected by the Mosaic system are more liable to disease.

Let me give a quotation from Dr. S. H. Kellogg: "One of the greatest discoveries of modern science is the fact that a large number of diseases to which animals are liable are due to the presence of low forms of parasitic life. To such diseases those which are unclean in their feeding will be especially exposed, while none will perhaps be found wholly exempt. Another discovery of recent times which has a no less important bearing on the question raised by this chapter is the now ascertained fact that many of these parasitic diseases are common to both animals and men, and may be communicated from the former to the latter" (The Book of Leviticus, p. 314).

He goes on to list the parasite trichinae in swine, diphtheria in turkeys, and glanders in horses. Evidently Moses didn't understand about these diseases and certainly the physicians in Egypt didn't know about them. But God knew! God made these distinctions between clean and unclean. Does this work out in history? It certainly does.

Listen to the statement of Dr. Noel de Mussy, presented to the Paris Academy of Medicine in 1885: "The idea of parasitic and infectious maladies, which has conquered so great a position in modern pathology, appears to have greatly occupied the mind of Moses and to have dominated all his hygienic rules. He excluded from Hebrew dietary animals particularly liable to parasites; and as it is in the blood that the germs and spores of infectious disease circulate, he orders that they must be drained of their blood before serving for food."

How did Moses know that? Well, Moses wouldn't have known it, but God told him.

I quote Dr. Kellogg again. "Even so long ago as the days when the plague was desolating Europe, the Jews so universally escaped infection that, by this their exemption, the popular suspicion was excited into fury, and they were accused of causing the fearful mortality among their gentile neighbors by poisoning the wells and springs."

Professor Hosmer wrote: "Throughout the entire history of Israel, the wisdom of the ancient lawgivers in these respects has been remarkably shown. In times of pestilence the Jews have suffered far less than others; as regards longevity and general health, they have in every age been noteworthy, and, at the present day, in the life-insurance offices, the life of a Jew is said to be worth much more than that of men of other stock."

Dr. Behrends also states: "In Prussia, the mean duration of Jewish life averages five years more than that of the general population." Now, of course, today the Jews are breaking down their rules about diet, and the gap is closing. There were times when the life of the Jews was actually twice that of their gentile neighbors.

There are some lessons in this for us today. We are apt to condemn Israel for placing such a great emphasis on the physical while missing the spiritual implications. At the same time, we tend to place such an emphasis on the spiritual that we ignore the physical altogether. A Christian should not ignore his body as to the food he eats, the use and abuse of the body, and the care of it. He should keep in mind that the body is the tabernacle of God today and the very temple of the Holy Spirit. Because a thing is physical does not preclude it from being spiritual.

At the same time, we are told very definitely today, that we can eat whatever we wish to eat. If you want to eat rattlesnake meat, you may eat rattlesnake meat. There is no spiritual value in eating or not eating certain foods. In fact, it is a superstition when you approach it like that. Let us look at several Scriptures concerning this:

"I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean" ([Rom. 14:14](#)).

"But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse" ([1Cor. 8:8](#)).

"Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them . . ." ([1Cor. 6:13](#)).

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" ([1Cor. 10:31](#)).

We should point out that gluttony is strictly forbidden and temperance, or self-control, is a command for a believer under grace.

### **Clean And Unclean Animals (on The Land) (11:1-8)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth [[Lev. 11:1-2](#)].

God draws a strict line of demarcation between light and darkness, night and day, black and white, right and wrong, clean and unclean. And by the way, God is the One who makes the difference between light and darkness. It is His intent to sharpen man's discriminating nature so that he is sensitive to these God-made distinctions. God wants man to love the good and to loathe the evil. This present age is witnessing the dulling of

man's sensibilities to the sharp distinctions between right and wrong and good and bad. Man tries to put everything in life in the gray zone of amorality. God draws these distinctions to drive man to the altar and the shed blood of Christ for cleansing and for forgiveness.

God makes the rules. Someone asks, "How do you know what is right?" The answer is that right is what God says is right! This is His universe. Do you know any better rules than the ones He has made? He's made the rules of the physical realm. (Do you want to defy the law of gravity and jump off the earth? It's an expensive trip, and it will cost you millions of dollars to do it. It put our government in debt to do it, and it will put you in debt to do it.)

God moves into the realm of the everyday life and nothing comes closer to that than what man eats. God declares certain things to be clean and certain to be unclean. Man is to be reminded that he lives in a world where sin abounds. Man must learn to choose the good and shun the evil.

The distinction was moral, yet the clean creatures were wholesome and gave nourishment to the body. The distinction of the clean and unclean animals is older than the Mosaic economy, and we know that Noah recognized such a division.

It is noticeable that the choice of edible animals, fish, and fowl follow generally the pattern of civilized man down through the centuries to the present day. That is no accident. God made the distinction and there are certain animals you want and some you don't want to eat. Another feature we should note is that certain animals were probably healthful in that land and in that day which might not be true elsewhere. Today we have no command concerning clean and unclean animals for food.

There are great moral issues involved in this chapter. Man lives in a world of sin, and God requires recognition of this fact. Choices must be made. Fallen man outside of Eden still has a "tree" of which God says he must not eat. I think the moral objective is primary. You remember that when Peter saw the sheet come down with all kinds of animals and birds in it, he didn't want to eat when God told him to eat. God then told him, "Don't you call unclean what God has called clean" (See [Acts 10:11-15](#)). In other words, God makes the rules, and man must make his decisions according to God's rules. This is a tremendous moral lesson.

Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat [[Lev. 11:3](#)].

This was the rule to be followed to determine the animals to be eaten. This was repeated in [Deuteronomy 14:6](#), and in that chapter it lists the ox, the sheep, the goat, the hart, the roebuck, the fallow deer, the wild goat, the pygarg, the wild ox, and the chamois.

In Leviticus, the principle and rule are given with a few examples of those which are unclean. In Deuteronomy, the principle and rule are not emphasized, but a more extended list of the clean animals is given. Leviticus emphasizes the negative; Deuteronomy emphasizes the positive.

In Leviticus the division of clean and unclean is sharply drawn although this is not a new commandment. The distinction does not follow any biological division, but a health factor was involved.

Some heathen nations, Persia for example, attributed the creation of certain animals to the good god while other animals were the product of a bad god. God created all the animals. Neither did the nature of the animal, as representing some sin or virtue, make the distinction. For example, the lion was unclean, but it represents the Lord Jesus Christ and is the symbol of the tribe of Judah. That is why Christ is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

There is not some mysterious connection between the soul and the body as one finds in some heathen cults today. The nature of the animal is not transferred to the one who eats it. That's just nonsense and superstition. Some vegetarians think people become cruel because they eat animal meat. Well, I've seen some pretty mean folk who are vegetarians. May I say, such ideas are nonsense.

For Israel, the distinction between the clean and unclean animals was part of God's plan to keep them separate from all nations. Even today Kosher has a particular meaning to everyone. They were constantly reminded that they lived in a world where choices had to be made.

For the Christian there are some spiritual applications. We have already shown that there is no merit in following a ritual regarding meat. But it is interesting to note that "to meditate" is a figurative expression of a cow chewing the cud. "But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" ([Ps. 1:2](#)). Meditating is a valid application for the chewing of the cud for the spiritual benefit of believers.

Likewise, the parting of the hoof speaks of the walk of the believer in separation. "I therefore, the prisoner of the LORD, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" ([Eph. 4:1](#)). "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us. . . . See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise" ([Eph. 5:2, 15](#)). The relationship between the study of the Word of God and the walk of the believer is intimately tied together. "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" ([2Tim. 3:14-15](#)). "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" ([James 1:22](#)). My friend, the walk of the believer is tied up with the Word of God. If you are going through this world, you will have to chew the cud, the Word of God, and you will need to have that separated walk that only the Word can produce. The Bible-studying believer, who puts into practice the teaching of the Word of God, identifies himself as a child of God by his work and his walk.

Friend, what kind of tracks are you making? I remember the story of a man years ago when someone tried to hand him a tract. He asked what it was and was told it was a tract. He handed it back and said he couldn't read it. He said, "I'll just watch your tracks."

Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.

And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you.

And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.

and the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you.

Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcase shall ye not touch; they are unclean to you [[Lev. 11:4-8](#)].

This is an extended list of animals which are unclean. Evidently, there must have been some question about these animals. Only vegetable-eating animals chew the cud. This eliminated the carnivorous animals.

God warned about eating a camel. The reaction would be, "Who would want to?" Don't you think this adds a note of humor to the words of our Lord when He accused the Pharisees of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel? The camel wasn't only lumpy; he was unclean. A coney is something like a rabbit and lives in rocky places. This corresponds to our rabbit. It is quite interesting to me that today there are those who emphasize that one should not eat pork but I have never heard them mention that one should not eat rabbit. The swine divides the hoof but does not chew the cud. The pig seems to be constantly eating but does not chew the cud. It is interesting to note that pork is still a difficult meat to digest. Swine are unclean animals. They are unclean in their eating habits.

The Israelite was even forbidden to have contact with the dead carcasses of these unclean animals. The spiritual implications of this are unavoidable.

### **Clean And Unclean Creatures (on The Water) (11:9-12)**

These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat.

And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination unto you:

They shall be even an abomination unto you; ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcases in abomination.

Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that shall be an abomination unto you [[Lev. 11:9-12](#)].

There is a sharp line drawn here as well as among animals. The clean fish must be characterized by two visible marks -- fins and scales -- to be clean. This rule applied to both fresh and saltwater fish. Crawling creatures in the water were forbidden, which would eliminate a great segment of the creatures of the waters. No examples are given, probably because the distinction is very clear cut.

Israel depended on the supply of fish from the Mediterranean Sea, the Sea of Galilee, and the Jordan River. Fish played a prominent part in the diet of the nation. One of the gates of Jerusalem was called the fish gate. This is where the fish from the Mediterranean were brought in, and it is interesting that this was a problem in the times of Nehemiah. The fishermen would bring in their fish on the Sabbath Day ([Neh. 13:16-22](#)).

The important role of fishing in the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ is well known to the student of the New Testament. The first disciples our Lord called were fishermen. They were told that they were to become fishers of men.

Jesus told the parable that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a net which caught good fish and bad fish ([Matt. 13:47-50](#)). What was the method of determining the good from the bad fish? It is not whether the fish were large or small but would be according to the Levitical law. A fish that has both fins and scales is clean, or good. Now how is this like the judgment of the wicked from among the just? Well, the believer is the one who is propelled by the Holy Spirit and who is clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Those are the two identifying marks. Those are the fins and the scales, if you please.

### **Clean And Unclean Flying Creatures (in The Air) (11:13-19)**

And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the osprey, And the vulture, and the kite after his kind; Every raven after his kind; And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckoo, and the hawk after his kind, And the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl, And the swan, and the pelican, and the gier eagle, And the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat [[Lev. 11:13-19](#)].

On the birds there are no visible markers like there are on the fish and the animals. But they seem to have in common that they are all unclean feeders. For the most part, they feed on dead carcasses of animals, fish, and other fowl.

A list of unclean birds of Palestine is given. This is another point that reveals that the Mosaic system was intended for the nation Israel and also for the particular land of Palestine. Some of these birds sound strange to us. They fall into the family of the eagles and the hawks, the vultures and the ravens, the owls and cormorants, and the swans and pelicans. They don't even sound appetizing. They are the "dirty birdies" because of their feeding habits. Now remember, some people eat some of these birds today. I can't say I would like any of them, but whether we eat them or don't eat them makes no difference -- meat will not commend us to God. The point is that it was teaching Israel to make a distinction. They had to make a decision about what was clean and unclean.

The lesson for us today is that we must make decisions about our conduct and our profession. We have to make the decision about whether to accept Christ or not, whether to study the Word of God or not, whether to walk in a way pleasing to God or not. That is the application for us today.

This section throws some light on the experience of Elijah. He was fed by the ravens -- dirty birds. Elijah did not eat the ravens, but they fed him. This was a humbling experience for this man of God who obeyed God in every detail.

## **Clean And Unclean Creeping Creatures (on The Ground) (11:20-23)**

All fowls that creep, going upon all four, shall be an abomination unto you.

Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth;

Even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind.

But all other flying creeping things, which have four feet, shall be an abomination unto you [[Lev. 11:20-23](#)].

Well, folks, you can leave all of these off my menu. However, we must note that some of them are clean. There were apparently four species of locusts. The locust was the regular species; the bald locust had a protuberance; the beetle was a locust with a protuberance and a tail; the grasshopper was a locust with a tail but without a protuberance. So they were permitted to eat these four kinds of locusts. But, friend, if you're having me over for dinner, let's have something else on the menu! Although they don't appeal to me, there is nothing religiously or ceremonially unclean about them. John the Baptist had a scriptural diet when he ate locusts and wild honey.

## **Contact With Carcasses Of Unclean Animals (11:24-38)**

And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even.

And whosoever beareth aught of the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

The carcases of every beast which divideth the hoof, and is not clovenfooted, nor cheweth the cud, are unclean unto you: every one that toucheth them shall be unclean.

And whatsoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beasts that go on all four, those are unclean unto you: whoso toucheth their carcase shall be unclean until the even.

And he that beareth the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: they are unclean unto you [[Lev. 11:24-28](#)].

Not only was Israel forbidden to eat unclean animals, but also they were forbidden to touch the carcass of an unclean animal. Contamination by contact is the principle here. This was a great principle of life that was restated in the days of the return of Israel after the Captivity. "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these,

shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean" ([Hag. 2:11-13](#)).

There is a very important principle set before us here. Cleanliness or holiness is not transferred by contact. On the contrary, dirt, sin, and unholiness are transferred by contact. In other words, it is impossible to bring holiness out of the unholy. But the unclean can affect the clean. An unrighteous man cannot produce righteous works which are acceptable to God. You cannot bring righteousness out of unrighteousness.

This principle operates as a law in every realm of life and in all strata of society. A gallon of dirty water is not made clean by adding a gallon of clean water. On the other hand, one drop of dirty water will contaminate the clean water. A boy with the measles is never cured by contact with a boy who is well, but the well boy may very well catch the measles from the sick boy. A Christian cannot mingle with the world and play with sin without becoming contaminated. Where do we get the idea that a Christian can dabble with drugs and drinking and night clubs and wild parties? Some claim that the way to reach the lost is to meet them on their level. Well, do they reach the lost that way? No, they are contaminated and take part in those sins themselves. The New Testament is clear on this. "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" ([Jude 1:23](#)). It is a terrible mistake to mix and mingle with sin. We are to beware of all contamination.

An Israelite was reminded of this great principle when he walked along the road and saw a dead dog or a dead bear. He was forbidden to carry the carcass or any part of it. He was not to take a bone or the skin for any use. If he inadvertently touched the carcass of an unclean animal, he was to wash his garments and remain unclean until the end of the day.

These are great spiritual lessons for us. The Christian is sanctified by the redemption of Christ and is clothed with His garments of righteousness. But we walk through the world where we can become contaminated. We still have the old nature. Not until we lay down this body in death will we be completely and totally sanctified and removed from the very presence of sin.

**These also shall be unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the weasel, and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind,**

**And the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole.**

**These are unclean to you among all that creep: whosoever doth touch them, when they be dead, shall be unclean until the even**  
**[Lev. 11:29-31].**

These are creatures that live on the ground or under the ground. They must have been rather commonplace but they were to be avoided by the Israelite. The carcass of a mole could contaminate him as much as the carcass of an elephant. So he was constantly reminded that he lived in a world of fallen creatures, and that little sins are as heinous in God's sight as big sins. The mote and the beam are alike to God. "Little sins" are also sin and must be avoided.

And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed.

And every earthen vessel, whereinto any of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it.

Of all meat which may be eaten, that on which such water cometh shall be unclean: and all drink that may be drunk in every such vessel shall be unclean.

And every thing whereupon any part of their carcase falleth shall be unclean; whether it be oven, or ranges for pots, they shall be broken down: for they are unclean, and shall be unclean unto you.

Nevertheless a fountain or pit, wherein there is plenty of water, shall be clean: but that which toucheth their carcase shall be unclean [[Lev. 11:32-36](#)].

Now we go into the kitchen. It must have been a commonplace experience for some rodent to get into the kitchen of that day and fall into one of the vessels and die. Any earthen vessel had to be broken and the water or grain or whatever was in it had to be thrown out. A bronze vessel was to be scoured clean. You see, God taught His people cleanliness in the preparation of food. And he was teaching them a lesson in holiness. Every vessel was holy to God and it was all to remain clean. In the Mosaic system, cleanliness was next to godliness and this applied to even the smallest detail in domestic situations. God guarded His people against contamination and pollution.

If the dead carcass fell into a fountain or a lake, the water was not contaminated. It was too big and too fresh.

Isn't it wonderful that the Lord Jesus Christ is the fountain of living water? He is not contaminated by contact with the sinner or the sick, the leper or the woman with an issue of blood. Jesus said: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" ([John 4:14](#)). Also "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" ([John 7:37-38](#)).

And if any part of their carcase fall upon any sowing seed which is to be sown, it shall be clean.

But if any water be put upon the seed, and any part of their carcase fall thereon, it shall be unclean unto you [[Lev. 11:37-38](#)].

Now we leave the kitchen and go out into the field and the food production. Dry seed that was to be sown could not be contaminated by contact with a carcass of the unclean. However, if the seed was wet, then its shell or armor had been penetrated and it was unclean.

This is why the child of God needs a shell or armor today. We are told, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" ([Eph. 6:11](#)).

### **Contact With Carcasses Of Clean Animals (11:39-40)**

And if any beast, of which ye may eat, die; he that toucheth the carcase thereof shall be unclean until the even.

And he that eateth of the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even [[Lev. 11:39-40](#)].

Any clean animal that died of itself or of disease was unclean. In [Malachi 1:8](#) God forbade the sacrifice of any animal that was lame or sick. God will not accept the second-best or the castoff from us either.

### **Contamination Of Creeping Creatures (11:41-45)**

And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth shall be an abomination; it shall not be eaten.

Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat; for they are an abomination.

Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby [[Lev. 11:41-43](#)].

Everything that crept on the earth or that went on its belly was unclean. God gives the reason they should not become unclean with them:

For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy [[Lev. 11:44-45](#)].

All creeping things were unclean as representatives of the fall of man when the serpent was cursed and made to crawl on its belly.

### **Classification Of Clean And Unclean Made By A Holy God (11:46-47)**

This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth:

To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten [[Lev. 11:46-47](#)].

It is God who makes the sharp distinction between the clean and the unclean. Holiness in little things is essential. This is the real test of God's man. The acid test of any life of any of God's people is this. God says, "I am your Lord. I am holy. Be ye holy."

My friend, you must make the decision as to whether you are going to walk with God and for God in this contaminated world. This is the lesson for us from his chapter of the clean and the unclean.

## Chapter 12

Theme: Cleansing of a mother after childbirth; a sacrifice for atonement

In the preceding chapter we saw the contamination of sin by contact. The external character of sin was emphasized -- we live in a world surrounded by sin.

This chapter places the emphasis on the internal character of sin. Not only do we become sinners by contact, but we are sinners by birth. And this chapter is the law concerning motherhood, the transmission of sin by inheritance. The very nature that we inherit is a fallen, sinful nature. David said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" ([Ps. 51:5](#)). This chapter is in the field of obstetrics, as the former chapter was in the field of dietetics and pediatrics. Our Lord is the Great Physician and He is the specialist in all fields.

Pagan people entertained superstitious notions about the uncleanness of women in childbirth. There is not a shred of that notion in the Levitical economy, as we hope to point out. It was also a pagan practice to place women in an inferior position to man. This law does not contain a breath of that idea, as the Mosaic economy lifted womanhood and ennobled motherhood in contrast to the base heathenism that surrounded the nation Israel.

Obviously there were certain hygienic benefits in the practice of these God-given laws -- as we saw in the matter of diet. God was caring for His people physically, and at the same time was teaching them (and us) the great spiritual truth that we are born in sin.

There is a doctrine today that is almost totally rejected, and that is the total depravity of man -- but man is certainly demonstrating it! Our news media is full of it, and man's total depravity is quite obvious. We are told: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" ([Rom. 5:12](#)).

The world thinks of innocence, virtue, and goodness in the picture of a young mother holding a sweet, cuddly baby in her arms. But God paints a different picture, an opposite portrait, in this chapter. There's the young mother holding the precious baby, but he's not a picture of innocence and sinlessness. He is a picture of uncleanness and sin. Do you know what happened? That mother brought into the world a sinner. That's all she could bring into the world because she is a sinner -- and Papa's a sinner too.

S. H. Kellogg has this comment: "In the birth of a child, the special original curse against the woman is regarded by the law as reaching its fullest, most consummate and significant expression. For the extreme evil of the state of sin into which the first woman,

by that first sin, brought all womanhood, is seen most of all in this, that now woman, by means of those powers given her for good and blessing, can bring into the world only a child of sin" (The Book of Leviticus, p. 314).

You recall that God said to the first woman: ". . . I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" ([Gen. 3:16](#)). Not only would the woman travail in bringing a child into the world, but the chances are that child would be a heartbreak to her because that child is a sinner.

That is, I think, what Paul had in mind when he put down certain regulations concerning woman's place in public worship. He says: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" ([1Tim. 2:12](#)). He is talking about the place of doctrinal leadership in the church, and I think the reason is twofold. Adam was created first, and also in the transgression the woman was the one who was deceived. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" ([1Tim. 2:13-14](#)). This is not teaching the superiority of man over woman. Rather, it is a matter of order and headship. Secondly, the woman was first in the transgression -- she was the leader there.

The fact that a Christian mother travails in the birth of her child is an evidence of God's judgment, but it certainly does not mean she loses her salvation when she brings a sinner into the world. "Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" ([1Tim. 2:15](#)). She is not saved by childbearing; she is saved through childbearing. In other words, she does not become unclean and lose her salvation by bringing a sinner into the world. The evidence of her salvation is in her faith, love, holy living, and sobriety. "Uncleanness" under the Law reminded her that she had brought a sinner into the world. "Travail" under grace reminds the mother today that a sinner has been born even though she is a believer.

When Paul the apostle said to the Philippian jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" ([Acts 16:31](#)) he didn't mean that his family would be saved just because he believed on the Lord. Neither does it mean that your children are saved just because you are a believer. Discipline has broken down in the homes of America because too many parents think they are raising a sweet little flower when what they have is a stinkweed! That, my friend, is what you and I are, and that is what we have brought into the world. Again and again I asked my daughter, "Are you sure you trust Christ? Are you saved?" She asked me once, "Why do you keep asking me?" And I told her, "I just want to make sure." She has my nature and I happen to know that this nature of mine is a lost nature. She is not automatically saved just because I am a Christian and a preacher of the gospel.

This raises another question. Someone said, "If my baby is born a sinner and he dies in infancy, is he lost because he is a sinner?" No. In Adam all die, and that's the reason the little one died. But the Lord Jesus said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels [spirits] do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" ([Matt. 18:10](#)). The word "angels" should be translated spirits -- their spirits behold the face of the Father. In other words, when that little infant

dies, his spirit goes to be with the Father. Why? Because Christ came down and died for sinners, and the little one has not reached the age of accountability. The minute he does, then he has to make a decision for Christ.

I like the quaint epitaph that Robert Robertson placed over the graves of his four children:

Bold infidelity, turn pale and die,  
Beneath this stone four infants' ashes lie;  
Say are they lost or saved,  
If death's by sin, they sinned for they lie here;  
If Heaven's by works, in Heaven they can't appear.  
Reason -- Ah, how depraved.  
Reverse the Bible's sacred page, the knot's untied.  
They died, for Adam sinned; they live, for Jesus died.

### **Cleansing Of A Mother At The Birth Of A Male Child (12:1-4)**

*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,*

*Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean [Lev. 12:1-2].*

The mother is unclean because she has brought a sinner into the world. Eve thought she had brought the Savior into the world when Cain was born, but she had brought into the world only a sinner -- the first murderer. Now this Levitical ritual is to remind women that they were bringing into the world the same kind of a baby that Eve had brought into the world. They cannot do good. They can only sin.

Her uncleanness is divided into two periods. The first period was seven days. We shall see in the next verse that the male child was circumcised on the eighth day. Circumcision was the badge given to Abraham.

I realize that the idea of uncleanness of motherhood conflicts with the popular notion of motherhood and the little baby, but we need to emphasize that the babies we are bringing into the world are sinners. They are going to run undisciplined. They will be revolutionaries. They will adopt the new morality, which is just old-fashioned sin. The whole philosophy of life has been entirely wrong. We need to start raising children by the Scripture and not by Dr. Spock. This has been the cause of deep problems during my entire time in the ministry -- I have seen parents after parents raise their children in this way.

*And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.*

*And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled [Lev. 12:3-4].*

We have mentioned that the mother's period of uncleanness is divided into two periods. The first was seven days, and then the male child was circumcised on the eighth day. Being born an Israelite did not include him in the covenant until the baby was

circumcised. Each Israelite was first of all a son of Adam and was born outside the covenant. This is what Paul means in [Romans 9:6-7](#): ". . . For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children . ." Natural birth does not bring a man into a right relationship with God. Natural birth separates a man from God! God owes us nothing. He sent His Son out of His grace to us.

The second period of the mother's uncleanness was for thirty-three days so that the total time was forty days. This reaffirms the fact that the rite of circumcision had a meaning of cleansing. It was God's way in the Old Testament of saying, ". . . Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me . ." ([Matt. 19:14](#)). The circumcision of the male child removed some of the sin from the mother. His acceptance meant her acceptance also. She is reminded that she is still a sinner, and thirty-three more days are required for her cleansing.

It is interesting to note that Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day. Then Jesus was brought to the temple when the days of Mary's purification according to the Law of Moses were accomplished ([Luke 2:21-23](#)). Mary was a sinner even though she brought the sinless Savior into the world. His birth did not save her. Only her new birth by accepting Jesus as her own Savior could save her.

Jesus was circumcised to fulfill the Law of Moses. He came to fulfill, not to destroy the Law. He was made (born) under the Law. Thus he identified Himself perfectly with His people.

### **Cleansing Of The Mother At The Birth Of A Female Child (12:5)**

But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days [[Lev. 12:5](#)].

The time is doubled for the cleansing at the birth of a female child. I don't know why this was so, but obviously the circumcision of the male child had something to do with the reduction of the days and it relieved some of the curse.

Grace brings us to a new day. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" ([Gal. 3:27-29](#)).

### **Cleansing Of The Mother By Bringing A Sacrifice For Atonement (12:6-8)**

And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle dove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest:

Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female.

And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean [[Lev. 12:6-8](#)].

The mother brought a burnt offering and a sin offering to God and the priest offered it for her. She certainly was not saved just by bringing children into the world, as some claim. She had to have a sacrifice. A mother must trust the Lord Jesus Christ. With that in mind, she is prepared to raise her child as a sinner who needs to accept Christ. Oh, how the home needs that today!

You remember that when the Lord Jesus was born, his mother brought turtledoves because the poor could bring them as an offering. She had to have an offering because she was a sinner; she was not sinless. She brought an offering. But there was no offering for the Lord Jesus. No offering was ever made for Jesus or by Jesus. He is the sinless One. He was the offering for the sin of the world. He is the Lamb of God.

Friends, think on these things. We live in a world that has gone crazy, has gone mad. This world has turned its back upon the Almighty God, and the judgment of God is beginning to fall upon the world. We are demonstrating the fact that only sinners are born into this world and that all people need the saving grace of God. All people need the shed blood of Christ to pay the penalty for their sins.

## Chapter 13

**THEME:** Diagnosis of leprosy; disposal of lepers' garments

This is concerned with the exceeding sinfulness of sin. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man" ([Matt. 15:19-20](#)).

We come now to another unusual section of this book, the section on leprosy. Someone may ask whether this is practical for today. May I say that all of this book is practical. We are in the section of the book which we have entitled "Holiness in Daily Life." God is concerned with the conduct of His children. We saw that He is concerned with their food; now in [Lev. 13](#), [14](#), and [Lev. 15](#) we find He is concerned with leprosy and the cleansing of running issues.

Leprosy and running issues of the flesh are accurate symbols of the manifestation of sin in the heart of man. It shows the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the effect of sin in action. The emphasis of Leviticus is on sin.

In the heart of this book on worship of a holy God is this extended section on leprosy and issues in the flesh. The filthiness and repulsiveness of sin are represented in leprosy. The hopelessness and deadliness of sin are accurately portrayed. The leper who trudged down a hot, dusty, oriental road crying out, "Unclean! Unclean!" was a reminder to the Israelite that he, too, was a moral leper who needed supernatural cleansing.

Perhaps you are one of those who thinks that you will be saved by your works and that you don't need Christ as your Savior. May I say that if you could go to heaven just like you are, without Christ, you would go through heaven crying out, "Unclean! Unclean!" No angel would touch you with a twenty-foot pole. You couldn't come anywhere near the presence of God.

You see, man has the idea that he has some kind of claim on God, but we have no claim upon Him whatsoever. He owes us nothing. He could blot out of existence this little earth that we live on, and it would not even make a dent in this universe. But thank God, He loves us. I'm so glad He loves us! That is the only thing that could bind Him to us.

God is driving a point home to us, and it is the same point He was driving home to Israel: Sin is exceeding sinful. This comparison between leprosy and sin is a recurring theme in the Scripture: "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. . . . My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. . . . For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. . . . For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin" ([Ps. 38:3, 5, 7, 18](#)). That is the way we look to God.

Isaiah also had leprosy in his thinking as he described the sins of his people: "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" ([Isa. 1:6](#)). "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" ([Isa. 53:4-5](#)). Now, some folk say he is talking about leprosy here and that he is referring to a physical disease. No, my friend, Isaiah is talking about sin being laid on the Lord Jesus Christ. Can we be sure of that? Listen to the apostle Peter: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" ([1Pet. 2:24](#)).

We were dead in sin and He bare our sins in His own body on the tree. By His stripes we are healed. Now it is true that physical disease is a manifestation of sin and that behind disease germs there lies sin. If there were no sin, there would be neither death nor sickness.

There are two important considerations we should take into account as we get into this chapter.

1. The Bible does not agree with the generally accepted view that leprosy was incurable in that day. Cleansing is mentioned in [Leviticus 14:2](#). There were supernatural cures such as Naaman's in [2Kings 5](#). Some expositors think that Job had leprosy. Since there was no scientific diagnosis of the disease in those days, there has been discussion on what the leprosy was. They had medicines in that day which they used for the cure of leprosy.

This chapter and the following do not contain a cure for leprosy. This should be carefully noted. It gives instructions to the priest on how a case of leprosy is to be determined, and

the measures to be taken to prevent its spreading in the camp. After it had been cleansed, there was a ritual to be followed. It is not a cure that is presented here. In chapter 14 it deals with the ceremonial cleansing of the leper after his cure and not the cure itself. The main objective was to teach great spiritual truths in connection with the cleansing of leprosy as a type of sin.

2. This is not a scientific treatise on the detection, prevention, and cure of leprosy. There is no attempt to give a medical diagnosis of the disease. The diagnosis was a practical one which was adjusted to the knowledge of that day. It has direct and definite spiritual lessons for this day. The ritual was ceremonial rather than curative.

There has been some discussion on the part of some Christian physicians as to whether leprosy as we know it is the disease that the Mosaic system is considering. There has been much written in the past, both pro and con. It would seem that the descriptions in these chapters describe leprosy as we understand this loathsome and death-dealing disease but includes also elephantiasis, skin diseases, running issues, cancer, tumors, and social diseases. This is illustrated in chapter 15, and we will amplify this aspect when we come to that chapter. After all, only the first stages of leprosy are described here. By the time the person was declared to be a leper, he was ejected from society.

This chapter deals with the cleansing of leprosy, not the cure of leprosy. The leper was cleansed after he had been cured.

### **Diagnosis Of A New Case Of Leprosy (13:1-8)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,

When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests [[Lev. 13:1-2](#)].

Compared to modern techniques of diagnosis, the methods of Leviticus seem very crude. The procedure was adapted to the knowledge of that day. The diagnosis was not done in order to prescribe a treatment, but rather, it was a religious ritual. This needs to be stated emphatically.

Now friends, since I have a cancer, I know how my doctor treated me. He looked at it and just by looking he came to the conclusion that it was a cancer. It was not until a biopsy had been taken in a scientific way that they decided that they should operate. So in that day, they could have known a great deal more than we realize. The priests handled literally thousands of cases, I think, and so they would know what to look for. Perhaps this isn't as crude as we today think that it was. It may have actually been a pretty good diagnostic system. Still, the emphasis here is upon the spiritual ceremony rather than the physical catharsis.

Three symptoms are identified here: a rising or boil, a scab or small tumor, a bright spot. These are symptoms of leprosy, but the person having such a symptom need not necessarily be a leper. The first step was to bring the patient with a symptom to Aaron or one of the priests.

Just so, any manifestation of sin, either small or great, should be brought immediately to our Great High Priest, who is also the Great Physician. We are to pray about everything. That includes every manifestation of sin. That is the place to go when we are physically sick, too. I received a caustic letter not so long ago telling me not to be so proud and go to a certain healer. They said I would be healed if my pride would be overcome. Friends, I took my case to the Great Physician, the Lord Jesus. I go there when I sin, and I go there when I am sick. That is the place to go first. That doesn't mean I didn't go to a doctor when I got sick. But I went to the Lord Jesus first! "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. . . . Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" ([Heb. 4:16](#); [Heb. 7:25](#)). "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1John 1:9](#)).

And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean [[Lev. 13:3](#)].

There was no rash judgment made. The man or woman was carefully watched over a period of time. If a lesion on the skin began to disappear, the person was dismissed. If the hair turned white, it was becoming dead and showed that the disease was beneath the skin. Then the priest would pronounce the person unclean.

The Great Physician has made a thorough inspection of us and has made a diagnosis. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways" ([Rom. 3:13-16](#)). God says, "All have sinned." We are unclean. You see, just like any doctor, the Great Physician asks us to open our mouth and He looks down our throat. Then He asks us to stick out our tongue and there He finds deceit and lying. We are all spiritual lepers. God cannot have lepers in heaven. He must cure them before they get there.

Leprosy is a type of sin.

1. It becomes overt in loathsome ways. One night a drunken man came in off the street and sat in our warm auditorium. Suddenly he collapsed and fell out of the seat. We had to call an ambulance. By the time the ambulance got there, he was a mess. May I say to you, sin is loathsome in many ways.
2. It is a horrible disease. Dr. Kellogg wrote, "From among all diseases, leprosy has been selected by the Holy Ghost to stand . . . as the supreme type of sin, as seen by God!"
3. It begins in a small way, "a rising, a scab, a bright spot." Finally it delivers a death-dealing blow. What is at first so very small becomes a frightful and dreadful condition. Lepers in most countries today are isolated from the populace and are segregated into hospitals or colonies. Those of us who have seen pictures of lepers from missionaries in Africa or Asia realize what a dread disease it is. A century ago a missionary, William Thompson, described leprosy in Palestine in The Land and the Book: "As I was

approaching Jerusalem, I was startled by the sudden apparition of a crowd of beggars, sans eyes, sans nose, sans hair, sans everything. . . . They held up their handless arms, unearthly sounds gurgled through throats without palates; in a word, I was horrified!" (Vol. I, pp. 530-531).

Sin seems ever so infinitesimal in a child. It may appear as a bright spot at first. The parents and relatives think little Willie is cute when he acts up, yells and kicks his feet in the air. Unless Willie is disciplined and is led to a saving knowledge of Christ, he will become lawless and even criminal. Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler were all cute little babies once upon a time.

No drunkard ever became an alcoholic by taking one drink, but no man ever became an alcoholic who did not take the first drink. All sins start small.

4. Leprosy not only progresses slowly from a small beginning, but it progresses surely. From a little beginning, it advances surely and steadily to a tragic crisis. I quote Dr. Thompson again: "It comes on by degrees in different parts of the body: the hair falls from the head and eyebrows; the nails loosen, decay, and drop off; joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up and slowly fall away: the gums are absorbed, and the teeth disappear; the nose, the eyes, the tongue, and the palate are slowly consumed; and, finally, the wretched victim sinks into the earth and disappears."

This is the way God says sin is. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" ([James 1:15](#)).

Leprosy is a living death. A leper was treated as a dead man. The wages of sin is death. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" ([Gal. 6:7-8](#)).

Like leprosy, sin destroys the whole man. Both are corrosive in their effect, working slowly and surely, until finally they break out in an angry display that eventuates in death. No man ever went wrong overnight. Leprosy did not kill in a day -- it is not like a heart attack. The leper's life was a walking death. Just so, the sinner is also dead even while he lives. Paul writes, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world . . ." ([Eph. 2:1-2](#)).

The final, desperate, and inescapable end of sin and leprosy is death.

5. Leprosy does not produce sharp and unbearable pain as some other diseases. Leprosy keeps the man sad and restless. Likewise, sin produces a restlessness and sadness in man that is evident in our culture. Folks want to be amused, want to be made to laugh because they are sad. Crowds flock to places of amusement, to the night clubs, to be entertained. Take a look at the sad faces with vacant stares. Watch the cars filled with restless folk going nowhere fast. We have a generation with itchy feet. It is leprosy.

Finally sin brings a person to the point of not having any feeling, just as Paul said, "Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all

uncleanness with greediness" ([Eph. 4:19](#)). They lapse into a state of sad contentment. They can reach the state of having a "... conscience seared with a hot iron" ([1 Tim. 4:2](#)).

6. Leprosy is thought to be hereditary. Whether it is or not, sin is! All that sinners can bring into the world are more sinners. I am interested in the insight of a contemporary psychologist who recognizes that while the assumption of education is that "the moral nature of man is capable of improvement," the assumption of traditional Christianity is that "the moral nature of man is corrupt, or absolutely bad." He further observes that while education assumes that an exterior "human agent" may be the means of man's "moral improvement," traditional Christianity assumes that "the agent is God" and that rather than the moral nature of man being improved, "it is exchanged for a new one."

7. Finally, leprosy and sin separate from God. It seemed cruel that the leper was not only shut out from society, but also from the sanctuary. It must be remembered that God is holy, the Author of righteousness and cleanliness. Therefore, leprosy is a fitting symbol of sin that separates from God. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" ([Isa. 59:2](#)). In the New Jerusalem, the unforgiven and unwashed sinner is shut out from the presence of God according to [Revelation 21:27](#) and [Revelation 22:15](#).

So leprosy stands as a perfect type of sin. It is sin, as it were, made visible in the flesh. The priest was to look on the leper and pronounce him unclean. Just so, the Great Physician looks on the human family and pronounces it unclean. He does this so that we might come to Him for cleansing. He is ready to touch the leper and make him clean.

I have spent a long time in the beginning of this chapter because it is so important to see the analogy here and get the great spiritual message for us today. There is not much being said about sin today, yet our basic problem is sin!

If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight be not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white; then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague seven days [[Lev. 13:4](#)].

Now in this verse we see that there was no haste in making the judgment. Likewise, God is slow to anger in His relationship with us. God is very patient and He grants every opportunity to the sinner. "... The LORD, The Lord GOD, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation" ([Exod. 34:6-7](#)). That verse is in the Old Testament. What does the New Testament say about the patience of God? "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" ([2 Pet. 3:9](#)).

You see, the priest shut up the man for seven days. He thought it was leprosy, but he was patient with him. Just so, God has shut up the world in quarantine for the disease of sin. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all" ([Rom. 11:32](#)). "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus

Christ might be given to them that believe" ([Gal. 3:22](#)). "Concluded" means to shut up together. God has the world shut up in quarantine, my friend, and He is not going to let man get very far out into His universe. It is rather amusing that when they brought the men back from the moon, they checked to see if they had brought any disease down here. Do you think we left any disease up there? God has us here under quarantine so that He might have mercy on us.

**And the priest shall look on him the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague in his sight be at a stay, and the plague spread not in the skin; then the priest shall shut him up seven days more [[Lev. 13:5](#)].**

After seven days the priest makes another inspection and if there is still an element of uncertainty, then the patient is placed in quarantine for seven more days. There was not a rash or hasty judgment. We should learn from this that we are not to make hasty and rash judgments of others. It is a serious matter to make a false charge against another believer. Paul told Timothy, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses" ([1Tim. 5:19](#)). He also warned that at the end times there would be false accusers.

When I was a pastor I made a rule that no one could come to me to criticize a church officer unless the accused man was present to hear it. Do you know how many accusations I heard in the last twenty-one years? Just one. We need to be careful.

**And the priest shall look on him again the seventh day: and behold, if the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean: it is but a scab: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean [[Lev. 13:6](#)].**

If the plague in the skin has not spread in fourteen days, but has improved, it obviously was not leprosy and the man is pronounced clean. Those were sweet words for the man, and he surely could sing a jubilee song. He did not need to be separated from his loved ones, but was clean and could go back to them.

Remember that the Lord touched the leper who came to Him and made him clean. More than that, He says to the spiritual lepers that their sins are forgiven. He healed the physical disease to demonstrate that He is the Savior who can forgive sins. Remember how the scribes and the Pharisees asked, ". . . Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" ([Luke 5:21](#)). So Jesus first told the man who was paralyzed that his sins were forgiven. Then He said, "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house." It is important to recognize that Jesus has the authority to do both. (See [Luke 5:17-26](#).)

**But if the scab spread much abroad in the skin, after that he hath been seen of the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen of the priest again:**

**And if the priest see that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a leprosy [[Lev. 13:7-8](#)].**

This is the dark side of the picture. This would now be the third inspection. Does God give a man a second chance? My friend, God will give the sinner a thousand chances, if that is what it takes.

Finally the verdict must be rendered. The man is declared a leper. It is an awful sentence. The man is put out. Contrast this to the man who was hanging under the sentence of leprosy and was expecting to be put out but then was declared to be clean. That cleansed man did not live like a leper from that day on. He is clean and he lives clean. What a lesson that is for us!

There are some folk who make a profession of being converted. They can stand inspection for a while but finally the awful disease of sin will break out in its frightful symptoms and it is obvious they are unclean. John speaks of this in [1John 2:19](#), "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Peter describes these unclean and immoral lepers as the dog returning to his own vomit and the sow returning to the mire ([2Pet. 2:22](#)).

### **Diagnosis Of An Old Case Of Leprosy (13:9-17)**

When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall be brought unto the priest;

And the priest shall see him: and, behold, if the rising be white in the skin, and it have turned the hair white, and there be quick raw flesh in the rising;

It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not shut him up: for he is unclean [[Lev. 13:9-11](#)].

This is a case of old leprosy, or we might call it chronic leprosy. There was no need to shut this man up for observation because he was definitely a leper.

There are hardened sinners who are so obviously sinners that even their best friends tell them so. Under this class would come the spiritual Mafia, the murderer and the thief and the alcoholic and the drug addict. These people are under the slavery of their sin and only a supernatural remedy can help in cases like this.

The polished and slick church member who is unsaved does not believe that he has leprosy. He resents being told that he is a lost sinner. The hardened sinner is easier to reach than he, and is more open to the gospel message. He knows he has leprosy.

And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of him that hath the plague from his head even to his foot . . . Then the priest shall consider . . . he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: it is all turned white: he is clean.

But when raw flesh appeareth in him, he shall be unclean . . . it is a leprosy. . . .

Or if the raw flesh turn again, and be changed unto white . . . then the priest shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: he is clean [[Lev. 13:12-17](#)].

This section shows another aspect of old leprosy. Although the entire body is covered, it does not necessarily follow that the case is hopeless. The remarkable statement here is that if the flesh has turned white, the patient is declared clean. This seems to indicate clearly that no sinner is hopeless. This may be what Isaiah meant when he wrote: "Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint" ([Isa. 1:5](#)). Then follows the great invitation of the Great Physician, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" ([Isa. 1:18](#)).

Notice that the true mark and symptom of leprosy is the raw flesh. The Bible has much to say about the flesh, even flesh as it is manifested in the believer: ". . . for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" ([Gen. 6:12](#)). ". . . The flesh profiteth nothing . . ." ([John 6:63](#)). "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing . . ." ([Rom. 7:18](#)). "That no flesh should glory in his presence . . . flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God . . ." ([1Cor. 1:29](#) and [1Cor. 15:50](#)). ". . . Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" ([Eph. 2:3](#)). "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" ([Phil. 3:3](#)). "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" ([Jude 1:23](#)).

It is obvious from these passages that the raw flesh is the old nature which was judged on the Cross. When it manifests itself in a believer, God must judge it. The flesh can never please God. Only that which the Holy Spirit produces in the life of the believer is acceptable to God.

### **Diagnosis Of Leprosy From A Boil Or A Burn (13:18-28)**

The flesh also, in which, even in the skin thereof, was a boil, and is healed,

And in the place of the boil there be a white rising, or a bright spot, white, and somewhat reddish, and it be shewed to the priest;

And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it be in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof be turned white; the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague of leprosy broken out of the boil.

But if the priest look on it, and, behold, there be no white hairs therein, and if it be not lower than the skin, but be somewhat dark; then the priest shall shut him up seven days:

And if it spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague.

But if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not, it is a burning boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean [[Lev. 13:18-23](#)].

These verses give the details of the inspection of a boil. It was to be inspected by the priest because of a possibility of leprosy beginning there. It is just like a small sore which may become cancerous. They followed the same process as in the new case of leprosy. If there were white hair in the boil and it penetrated lower than the skin, these indicated deep-seated trouble. The seven days of inspection permitted the priest to determine which direction the boil would take.

There is always the danger of old sins spreading and becoming malignant. Often a new convert speaks of deliverance from some evil habit and then years later that old sore may break out again. It does happen. The person who has had such an experience may have been unsaved all along, or he may have been genuinely saved but the old flesh is reappearing. A careful inspection should be made and no cursory judgment is to be pronounced.

Several years ago, a man who was an alcoholic accepted Christ as his Savior. Then he got sick and I went to visit him. I found out he wasn't really sick of anything. The place reeked of alcohol. He began to weep and said he'd slipped back. May I say to you, one might feel like taking a fellow like that and putting him across your knee and paddling him. But that wouldn't do a bit of good. We need to make an inspection and diagnose the leprosy. But we need to tell that man that his leprosy can be cured. He has a Savior. We are not to stand there and condemn him and scold him and then leave. That would make him feel bad and make me feel bad. No one would be helped. This man needed to know that he had a Savior who would forgive him. The Savior heals the leprosy that breaks out.

Or if there be any flesh, in the skin whereof there is a hot burning,  
and the quick flesh that burneth have a white bright spot,  
somewhat reddish, or white;

Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, if the hair in the  
bright spot be turned white, and it be in sight deeper than the  
skin; it is a leprosy broken out of the burning: wherefore the priest  
shall pronounce him unclean: it is the plague of leprosy.

But if the priest look on it, and, behold, there be no white hair in  
the bright spot, and it be no lower than the other skin, but be  
somewhat dark; then the priest shall shut him up seven days:

And the priest shall look upon him the seventh day: and if it be  
spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce  
him unclean: it is the plague of leprosy.

And if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not in the skin,  
but it be somewhat dark; it is a rising of the burning, and the  
priest shall pronounce him clean: for it is an inflammation of the  
[burning \[Lev. 13:24-28\]](#).

This describes a leprosy that comes from a hot burning. This hot burning is not a definite identification. It would be a burning from a hot object or it might mean the burning of an infection that has fever in it. At any rate, there was the danger of leprosy developing in it.

This seems to confirm the Scriptures that teach us that the flesh must be kept under close observation, for it can break out in the most alarming manner. "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness" ([Rom. 6:19](#)). "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" ([1Cor. 9:27](#)).

All of these passages teach us to watch carefully for the presence of a pimple in the flesh. The flesh cannot please God.

### **Diagnosis Of Leprosy Located In The Head Or The Beard (13:29-44)**

If a man or woman have a plague upon the head or the beard,

Then the priest shall see the plague: and, behold, if it be in sight deeper than the skin; and there be in it a yellow thin hair; then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a dry scall, even a leprosy upon the head or beard [[Lev. 13:29-30](#)].

Leprosy could break out in the most unlikely spots. If it were hidden by the hair of the head or beard, it might not be discovered for some time. Special observation must be made of leprosy in these areas. The same techniques were applied here as to any other area to determine the presence of leprosy. A yellow hair indicated that the infection was beneath the epidermis and was leprosy.

You know, sin sometimes insinuates itself in the chief places in the church, into a Sunday school teachers' meeting or a board meeting or a mission meeting. It enervates and vitiates the witness of the entire body of believers when there is sin at the head. Again, one must be careful in judging these things. There must be time to make a judgment.

And if the priest look on the plague of the scall, and, behold, it be not in sight deeper than the skin, and that there is no black hair in it; then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague of the scall seven days:

And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the plague: and, behold, if the scall spread not, and there be in it no yellow hair, and the scall be not in sight deeper than the skin;

He shall be shaven, but the scall shall he not shave; and the priest shall shut up him that hath the scall seven days more:

And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the scall: and, behold, if the scall be not spread in the skin, nor be in sight deeper than the skin; then the priest shall pronounce him clean: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.

But if the scall spread much in the skin after his cleansing;

Then the priest shall look on him: and, behold, if the scall be spread in the skin, the priest shall not seek for yellow hair; he is unclean.

But if the scall be in his sight at a stay, and that there is black hair grown up therein; the scall is healed, he is clean: and the priest shall pronounce him clean [[Lev. 13:31-37](#)].

So these verses go on to show that it might not be leprosy. Here again time is taken before a judgment is made and the patient is put in quarantine for seven days and then another period of seven days if that is necessary. This should teach us that accusations against the leadership in God's work should be received with a great deal of caution. Careful investigation must be made before a decision is determined.

The priest was given ample opportunity to observe the lesions. If the lesion spread later, the priest could still declare the man unclean. On the other hand, if black hair began to grow in the lesion, the priest would pronounce the man clean.

If a man also or a woman have in the skin of their flesh bright spots, even white bright spots;

Then the priest shall look: and, behold, if the bright spots in the skin of their flesh be darkish white; it is a freckled spot that groweth in the skin; he is clean [[Lev. 13:38-39](#)].

These verses point out that a freckle is not leprosy, and then the following verses show that baldness is not leprosy, although leprosy can break out in a bald spot.

And the man whose hair is fallen off his head, he is bald; yet is he clean.

And he that hath his hair fallen off from the part of his head toward his face, he is forehead bald: yet is he clean.

And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore; it is a leprosy sprung up in his bald head, or his bald forehead.

Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, if the rising of the sore be white reddish in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh;

He is a leprous man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; his plague is in his head [[Lev. 13:40-44](#)].

### **Disposal Of Lepers' Garments (13:45-59)**

And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean [[Lev. 13:45](#)].

The garments of a leper were to be torn. He was to cover his upper lip and go about crying, "Unclean, unclean." The condition of the leper is revealed in his awful state. He was capable of transmitting the disease by contact.

The sinner spreads his sin wherever he goes! His disease is contagious and he infects others. A father has a right to live his own life as he pleases, but he has no right to take a

precious son to hell with him. Many fathers are doing just that. The leper had defiled everything that was around him. That is what this teaches us. Even the garments would spread the infection. Just so, everything sin touches is defiled by it.

All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be [[Lev. 13:46](#)].

Many sinners comfort themselves by saying they will have plenty of company in hell. Notice that the leper was alone. He was separate.

The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in, whether it be a woollen garment, or a linen garment;

Whether it be in the warp, or woof; of linen, or of woollen; whether in a skin, or in any thing made of skin;

And if the plague be greenish or reddish in the garment, or in the skin, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a plague of leprosy, and shall be shewed unto the priest:

And the priest shall look upon the plague, and shut up it that hath the plague seven days:

And he shall look on the plague on the seventh day: if the plague be spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in a skin, or in any work that is made of skin; the plague is a fretting leprosy; it is unclean.

He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or any thing of skin, wherein the plague is: for it is a fretting leprosy; it shall be burnt in the fire.

And if the priest shall look, and, behold, the plague be not spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof or in any thing of skin;

Then the priest shall command that they wash the thing wherein the plague is, and he shall shut it up seven days more:

And the priest shall look on the plague, after that it is washed: and, behold, if the plague have not changed his colour, and the plague be not spread; it is unclean; thou shalt burn it in the fire; it is fret inward, whether it be bare within or without.

And if the priest look, and, behold, the plague be somewhat dark after the washing of it; then he shall rend it out of the garment, or out of the skin, or out of the warp, or out of the woof:

And if it appear still in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a spreading plague: thou shalt burn that wherein the plague is with fire.

And the garment, either warp, or woof, or whatsoever thing of skin it be, which thou shalt wash, if the plague be departed from them, then it shall be washed the second time, and shall be clean.

This is the law of the plague of leprosy in a garment of woollen or linen, either in the warp, or woof, or any thing of skins, to pronounce it clean, or to pronounce it unclean [[Lev. 13:47-59](#)].

This is an extended passage relative to the disposing of the garments. The quality of the garment made no difference. The best garments were just as infected as the cheap garments. There is a great lesson for us to learn through this. The righteousness of man is filthy rags in God's sight. Anything a sinner does or touches is contaminated by his sin.

Even the garments of those with lesser infections were to be washed. This passage shows an amazing insight into the spread of infection. We are all as an unclean thing and we, too, need washing. Only God has the remedy for the sinner.

## Chapter 14

**THEME:** Ceremonial cleansing of the leper; ceremonial cleansing of a house of leprosy; ceremonial law for cleansing of leprosy and issues of the flesh

Again I must insist that we are not being given a cure for leprosy. This is the ceremonial cleansing. In the preceding chapter we saw the details of the decisions in diagnosing the leprosy. There evidently were those lepers who were cured by the treatment of that day -- whatever it was, and also there were those who were healed supernaturally. We know today there is a cure for leprosy. It is not an incurable disease, and Scripture does not present it as such. It was a terrible disease and is used to teach us tremendous spiritual lessons about sin.

This chapter casts a ray of light and hope into the darkness of the leper's plight. We note that no physician's prescription is given for the treatment and cure of leprosy. Rather, it shows the ceremonial cleansing which follows the cure. This alludes to the redemption of the sinner. The ritual is entirely symbolic, yet there is a therapeutic value in the washing and cleansing.

When a man sinned in the Garden of Eden, sin separated God and man. This barrier of sin moved in a twofold direction in that it affected both God and man. It moved upward toward God and made man guilty before a holy God. It moved downward toward man, and man became polluted and contaminated with sin. Leprosy is a picture of sin in its pollution and contamination.

The remarkable feature in this chapter is the unique ceremony of cleansing and the treatment of a plague of leprosy in a house. The house is treated as a leper, obviously emphasizing the thought of contagion.

### **Ceremonial Cleansing Of The Leper Without The Camp (14:1-9)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest:

And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper [Lev. 14:1-3].

We notice that the priest is not going out to heal the leper but is going out to see if he has been healed. That is important. This is the "law of the leper in the day of his cleansing." This is a ritual which was to be followed precisely. It is a ceremonial cleansing which followed the cure of the leprosy. The man had been pronounced a leper by the priest. Now the priest must declare him cleansed. The priest must go out to the leper and meet him where he is. The leper would not dare to come into society, among the people, for he was forbidden to do that. He was shut out. Therefore, the priest must go to him. We find this mentioned in [Luke 17:12](#), "and as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off."

There is a wonderful parallel here to the person and work of our High Priest and Great Physician. He came forth from heaven's glory to this sin-cursed earth where man was suffering from the leprosy of sin. Friends, we can't go up into the society of heaven when we are lepers. We've done well to make it to the moon, but the men didn't get rid of their sin when they went to the moon. No, it was necessary for the Lord Jesus to come out of heaven's glory to this earth. The hymn states it very accurately, "Out of the ivory palaces into a world of woe." That is His story!

There is a great deal of emphasis placed on this. The second chapter of Hebrews tells about this: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. . . . Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. . . . For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" ([Heb. 2:9-10, 14, 16-17](#)). He came out of heaven's glory, down to this earth. The Priest had to come to the leper! "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" ([Gal. 4:4-5](#)).

We need to emphasize that He still goes all the way to the sinner to heal his plague of sin. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" ([Rev. 3:20](#)). God has declared that the heart of man is vile, and so it is God who must pronounce a man clean. He alone can cleanse. ". . . And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1John 1:7](#)).

Now notice what the priest did when he came to the leper.

Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop:

And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water:

As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water:

And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field [[Lev. 14:4-7](#)].

Didn't I tell you this could be an unusual ceremony? I don't think there is anything, anywhere, as unusual as this. All other sacrifices were to be made at the altar of the tabernacle and, later, at the temple at the command of God. This is the exception. The leper was shut out from the tabernacle, and so it was necessary for the priest to come to him.

The brazen altar for the sacrifices speaks of the Cross of Christ. But, you see, that Cross had to be down here on this earth. He had to come down here to meet us where we are. Friends, we were shut out from God. We were strangers and afar off, without hope and without God in the world. He had to come here to meet us in our need.

There were two live, clean birds used in this sacrifice. Most likely they were doves. One was killed -- to represent the death of Christ. The other was living -- to represent the resurrection of Christ. These are the two facets of the gospel. Paul says, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" ([1Cor. 15:3-4](#)). Two birds: death and resurrection!

Then notice that they used cedar wood. This, I think, is a symbol of the perfect humanity of Christ. The wood was incorruptible. It served a practical purpose as the handle of a brush to which the hyssop was tied with the scarlet ring. The scarlet was evidently scarlet wool.

The scarlet, I believe, is the sign of faith in the blood. It reminds us that Rahab was instructed to put out a scarlet cord as an evidence of her faith.

Hyssop is a plant that grows upon rocks in damp places. It represents the faith of the individual. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" ([Ps. 51:7](#)). It is the appropriation and the application of the redemption in Christ. You see, one can stand at the sidelines and nod his head and say he believes that Jesus died and rose again. That is not saving faith. The question is whether or not you have appropriated it for yourself. Have you actually put your trust in Him? Also it is the application of the death of Christ and the blood of Christ to sin in the believer's life. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1John 1:7](#)).

The earthen vessel speaks of the humanity of Christ. He took upon Himself our flesh, our humanity. Paul calls himself an earthen vessel in [2Corinthians 4:7](#). The earthen vessel is this body which we have. The emphasis is upon the weakness and infirmity of humanity. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" ([Heb. 4:15](#)).

Running water is living water. This water was taken from a running stream or fountain. This speaks of both the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

The ritual is both unusual and beautiful. One of the birds is slain over the earthen vessel in which there is the living water. This represents the death of Christ who offered Himself by the eternal Spirit. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" ([Heb. 9:14](#)).

It was essential to have the two birds to carry out the typical meaning of resurrection. The live bird was dipped in the blood of the slain bird to identify him with the bird that was slain. Then the live bird was given its freedom, permitting it to fly away. Christ was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification to give us the liberty to stand steadfast in Christ. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" ([Gal. 5:1](#)). That means not to get entangled again with religion and regulations and ritual and law. Christ took our place, died our death, paid our penalty. He was raised for us. If He died for us down here, then we died in Him ([2Cor. 5:14-15](#)) and we were raised in Him and we are in Him up yonder at the right hand of God ([Eph. 1:1-6](#)). Friends, the believer is as free as the birds of the heavens and is delivered from religion and ritual and law. The believer is now the bond-slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is subject to Christ's will and way. "If ye love me, keep my commandments" ([John 14:15](#)).

"He shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times." Seven is the number of completeness and finality. This settled forever the question of whether the leper was cleansed or not. There are only two kinds of people in this world, friends -- there are lepers and cleansed lepers. That is, there are lost sinners and saved sinners. That is all.

Living water and blood meet in this ceremony. John was careful to note for us that when Christ died and the soldier pierced His side, blood and water came forth ([John 19:34-35](#)). He repeats the fact that Jesus Christ came by water and the blood in his epistle ([1John 5:6](#)).

The Gnostics in John's day taught that Jesus was not God but that God came upon Him at baptism (that is the water) and departed from Him at the Cross (that is the blood). John insists that Jesus Christ was God from the very beginning when He was made flesh and that He was God on the Cross when He shed His precious blood. "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one" ([1John 5:8](#)). The ceremony and offering concerning the leper bore this out and illustrates this great truth.

And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days.

But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean [[Lev. 14:8-9](#)].

Now you'll have to admit that this is unusual also. The sacrificial ceremony has been completed denoting that the leper has been cleansed and accepted. Now, before he enters back into society, this further ritual shows that his old life has ended for him and a new life opens before him. The clothes represent the habits of life, his life style. The shaving off of all the hair of his body emphasizes the radical and revolutionary change that is taking place in his life.

Friends, when a believer comes to Christ, there is going to be a change! The putting away of the flesh is essential to a consistent walk before the world. The Lord Jesus said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" ([Matt. 7:16](#)). That is still the test tube for His own.

Again, the seven days indicate a complete cycle of testing and inspection. He is to be tested before he returns to society. I think that sometimes we let new converts give a testimony too soon. Believers are to be put up and watched for a while. There must be a newness of life.

At the end of this time, he washed himself thoroughly. The child of God needs to be continually washed. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" ([John 15:3](#)). "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" ([John 17:17](#)). Friend, you can never be cleansed or sanctified, set apart for God's use, until you are saturated with the Word of God. How important that is!

May I say that the seven days for the believer, the time of completeness, is when God completes the earthly journey of His church. Then He will present her to Himself as a cleansed church ([Eph. 5:25-27](#)). In the meantime the believer is in the process of being sanctified. This is the practical aspect. There should be a daily growth, a development in faith and in practice. Holiness is to the spiritual life what health is to the physical body.

### **Ceremonial Cleansing Of The Leper Within The Camp (14:10-32)**

And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil [[Lev. 14:10](#)].

The cleansed leper is now fit to enter the congregation of the Lord, but when he does, he must take his place with the other Israelites and present the offerings that every member of the congregation brought before the Lord. He brings two he lambs, one ewe lamb, fine flour, oil, and a log of oil. These are all the offerings which the average Israelite would normally make in his lifetime. It indicated the full acceptance of the cleansed leper.

And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:

And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD:

And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering: it is most holy:

And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot:

And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand:

And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD:

And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass offering:

And the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD.

And the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness; and afterward he shall kill the burnt offering:

And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the meat offering upon the altar: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean [\[Lev. 14:11-20\]](#).

This extended passage in the Authorized Version is in a single sentence. The action here is one continuous ceremony which encompasses all the offerings and means that the cleansed leper now stands before the door of the tabernacle just as any other Israelite.

He brings a he lamb for a trespass offering to remind him that he is still a sinner who sins and who needs the cleansing blood of Christ applied by the Holy Spirit to his life. The other he lamb is for a sin offering, because the cleansed leper still has his sin nature. The ewe lamb is for a burnt offering to set forth the person of Christ as God sees Him. The fine flour mingled with oil speaks of the meal offering which sets forth the loveliness of the humanity of Christ. The blood put upon the tip of his right ear indicates that he can now hear the voice of the Son of God saying, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." The blood on the right thumb indicates that with clean hands he can now serve God. The

blood on his right toe indicates that the cleansed leper can now walk in the way of God. The oil poured on his head indicates he is now totally dedicated to God.

All these offerings speak of Christ, through whom the cleansed leper is acceptable to God. There is nothing special about him just because he is a cleansed leper. Too often we see Christians who feel that somehow they are different and special. They withdraw from the others and think they are better than the others. My friend, we each must come just as all the rest come. Everyone must be acceptable to God through Christ. We each need to be washed. You remember that Peter protested to the Lord Jesus that He would never wash his feet. Our Lord answered, ". . . If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" ([John 13:8](#)). There is a great lesson in this for you and for me. Yes, the leper was brought back and yes, he had been cleansed of his leprosy, but he stood with the rest of the congregation before God. He still stood as a sinner and he needed the constant cleansing before God.

[Verses 21-32](#) explain the offering he could bring if he were poor. It would be logical to think that a person who had been a leper would not be able to afford an elaborate ritual. Again, the provision of God for the poor is marvelous. No one is shut out because of poverty. Turtledoves or pigeons could be substituted in the offering.

And if he be poor, and cannot get so much; then he shall take one lamb for a trespass offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering, and a log of oil;

And two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering.

And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD.

And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering, and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them for a wave offering before the LORD:

And he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot:

And the priest shall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand:

And the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD:

And the priest shall put of the oil that is in his hand upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the place of the blood of the trespass offering:

And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put upon the head of him that is to be cleansed, to make an atonement for him before the LORD.

And he shall offer the one of the turtledoves, or of the young pigeons, such as he can get;

Even such as he is able to get, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, with the meat offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed before the LORD.

This is the law of him in whom is the plague of leprosy, whose hand is not able to get that which pertaineth to his cleansing [[Lev. 14:21-32](#)].

### **Ceremonial Cleansing Of A House Wherein Has Been Leprosy (14:33-53)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession;

And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me there is as it were a plague in the house:

Then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest go into it to see the plague, that all that is in the house be not made unclean: and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house [[Lev. 14:33-36](#)].

I must confess that a house would be an unusual place to find leprosy. It is hard to know exactly what this meant. Perhaps it was some fungus growth or dry rot which entered into the fabric of the house. The priest would examine the house for greenish or reddish streaks and would examine it again in seven days to see if the plague were spreading.

The picture is that we live in an old house down here, which is our body. And we live in this world which is also contaminated by sin. The old house we live in is filled with leprosy.

There are three stages in the ceremonial cleansing of the house. First, the house was emptied of the furniture and occupants. The priest inspected it and then shut it up for seven days before making another inspection. If he then found a trace of leprosy, he removed the plaster from the infected part and took away the diseased stones.

And if the plague come again, and break out in the house, after that he hath taken away the stones, and after he hath scraped the house, and after it is plastered;

Then the priest shall come and look, and, behold, if the plague be spread in the house, it is a fretting leprosy in the house: it is unclean.

And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house; and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place.

Moreover he that goeth into the house all the while that it is shut up shall be unclean until the even.

And he that lieth in the house shall wash his clothes; and he that eateth in the house shall wash his clothes [[Lev. 14:43-47](#)].

If the priest found remnants of the infection in the renovated house, then the house was to be demolished and removed.

You know, there will be a time when God will demolish this earth that is tainted with leprosy. He is going to make it clean. There will be a new heaven and a new earth and they will be free from sin.

And if the priest shall come in, and look upon it, and, behold, the plague hath not spread in the house, after the house was plastered; then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed [[Lev. 14:48](#)].

The same ritual of the two birds is followed here as in the case of the ceremonial cleansing of the leper.

And he shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop:

And he shall kill the one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water:

And he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times:

And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet:

But he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house: and it shall be clean [[Lev. 14:49-53](#)].

## **Ceremonial Law For Cleansing Of Leprosy And Issues Of The Flesh (14:54-57)**

This is the law for all manner of plague of leprosy, and scall,

And for the leprosy of a garment, and of a house,

And for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot:

To teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean: this is the law of leprosy [[Lev. 14:54-57](#)].

This seems to be an emphatic enforcement of the law concerning the cleansing of the leprosy. Notice that the primary purpose of the ritual was to teach. "To teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean."

This is a great spiritual lesson and it is meant to teach us. You and I have spiritual leprosy. If either you or I went to heaven without Jesus Christ, without trusting Him, we would cry out, "Unclean, unclean," and we would be cast out. In Christ, we are accepted in the Beloved! My friend, where are you today? Are you a leper who has come to Jesus Christ for cleansing or are you still unclean?

## Chapter 15

**THEME:** Running issues of the man; running issues of the woman; repulsiveness and regulations of running issues

We have had two chapters on this matter of leprosy, and that has been bad enough, but it is going to get worse in this chapter. We are hearing a great deal about the pollution of our ecology in these days but there is a pollution of our souls also, and of our minds -- of our entire beings. These running sores are highly contagious and infectious, and they reveal to us the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Human nature is an overflowing cesspool and a sewer of uncleanness. Not only is human nature defiled, but it is defiling; not only is it corrupt, but it is corrupting. This chapter holds up the mirror to human nature, and after one look, no flesh can glory in His sight.

One would think that leprosy was the worst of the diseases, but actually it was not as contagious and contaminating as running issues. I would like to quote Dr. Leiker who is an authority on leprosy. "Leprosy is caused by tiny germs called leprosy bacilli, which can be seen only through a microscope. The bacilli were discovered in 1873 by the Norwegian doctor, Hansen. That is why leprosy is sometimes called Hansen's disease. The bacilli are present in large numbers in the skin of certain types of leprosy patients. They pass from these patients to the skin of healthy people, mainly by bodily contact. They then enter the skin through tiny wounds and scratches, where they may live and multiply. Only infectious patients -- those who have many bacilli in their skin -- are able to spread the disease. Many patients have no bacilli left in their skin and therefore they do not pass on the disease.

"Frequent bathing, washing of clothes, and keeping a clean house will help to prevent the disease, because many bacilli can be washed away with water and soap before they enter the skin. The most important thing is to avoid bodily contact with infectious cases of leprosy. The germs are not carried by air or by insects. There is no proof that leprosy is spread in other ways, but it may be that the disease is spread occasionally by means other than bodily contact.

"You may use patients' clothes, sleeping mats, tools, and so on, without risk, provided they are washed with hot water and soap and have been in the sun for at least 24 hours. There is no danger in visiting patients' homes, or even in shaking hands with them, but you should wash your hands afterwards. There is no reason to fear leprosy if these simple safeguards are taken."

Leprosy was a disease that could not be kept a secret for long. It worked slowly, but it would finally break out. In contrast, running issues could be kept secret for a lifetime. These represent the thought life of man as well as the overt act of sin. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" ([Gen. 6:5](#)). This has to do with that part of human nature that is defiled and affects others. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one" ([Job 14:4](#)). "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults" ([Ps. 19:12](#)). "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" ([Rom. 7:18](#)). Here we have the nature of man that is hidden. No one else may know about it. This is what we know down deep in our hearts. Yet, this secret sin can be passed on to others.

Some famous men have commented on the secret sin of man: "I see no fault committed which I too might not have committed" (Goethe). "Every man knows that of himself which he dares not tell to his dearest friends" (Dr. Samuel Johnson). "I do not know what the heart of a villain may be -- I only know that of a virtuous man, and that is frightful" (Count de Maistre). "Go to your own bosom. Knock there: and ask your heart what it doth know" (Shakespeare). "Why is there no man who confesses his vices? It is because he has not yet laid them aside. It is a waking man only who can tell his dreams" (Seneca).

The curse of sin has affected man's power in the propagation of the race. Man is only capable of producing after his kind -- a sinner as he is. The very fountain of the race is polluted. Many of these running issues are connected with the generative organs of the race. For the most part, they are the social diseases. There is filthiness and defilement connected with sexual sins that is appalling. David cried out to God, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" ([Ps. 51:7, 10](#)).

Today people talk about the new morality. It is interesting that they turn out the same old diseases with the new morality. Today the social diseases, venereal diseases, are increasing at an alarming rate. They are of epidemic proportion both in this country and in places abroad where our soldiers are stationed. That is the way sin is. And it robs a person of the joy of his salvation.

It seems strange that God would talk so much about such a repulsive subject. However, He gives to man a comprehensive view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. We get an unusual view of it in this chapter. We need to recall the words of Paul, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" ([Rom. 15:4](#)).

### **Running Issues Of The Man (15:1-18)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying [[Lev. 15:1](#)].

God addressed both Moses and Aaron. In chapter 14 where the "law of the leper" was under consideration, only the law-giver Moses was addressed. Aaron, as the high priest, is a prophetic picture of our Great High Priest. Only the Lord Jesus can give comfort and understanding to the afflicted as well as the extending of mercy and grace. Our High Priest cannot be touched by our sin, but He can be touched with the feeling of our

infirmities, because He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin ([Heb. 4:14-15](#) and [Heb. 2:17-18](#)).

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any man hath a running issue out of his flesh, because of his issue he is unclean.

And this shall be his uncleanness in his issue: whether his flesh run with his issue, or his flesh be stopped from his issue, it is his uncleanness [[Lev. 15:2-3](#)].

This vivid language reveals how sickening, disgusting, abhorrent, offensive, impure, repugnant, and utterly corrupt and corrupting the human nature is. The pus of sin is flowing from the human heart. We can see it all around us and in us. The defilement is here. We cannot rub shoulders with each other without it affecting our lives because human nature is not only corrupt, it is corrupting. You and I influence one another. I live my life in you, and you live your life in me. It cannot be otherwise. You are a preacher, whether you know it or not. You are preaching by your life.

When I was a pastor in Pasadena, I knew a very godly woman whose son was a drunkard. They lived a little way from the church. One could always tell when he was on what is called a "toot" because he would use both sides of the street on the way home. His mother was distressed and ashamed, and she asked me to talk with him. One day I saw him weaving down the street and I brought him into my study to talk with him. I told him how low-down he was, called him a sinner and a disgrace. I called him everything you could possibly call such a man, and he just hung his head and took it all. Then I said, "Don't you know that you are preaching by your life?" He asked, "Are you calling me a preacher?" When I told him he was, he got up the best he could as drunk as he was and wanted to fight me. You could call him anything else in the world but a preacher!

Well, my friend, whoever you are, you are a preacher. You are preaching some message by your life. You are influencing someone.

Human nature is corrupting because it is sinful. Even the regenerated man still carries his old sinful flesh. Listen to the words of the Lord Jesus:

"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man" ([Matt. 15:18-20](#)).

It is amazing today how many people are interested in religious ceremonies. Even though they go through those religious ceremonies, they have a heart that is just as filthy as it possibly can be. We all have that kind of heart, unless it has been cleansed by the blood of Christ.

James makes it very practical. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth . . . death" ([James 1:14-15](#)). Paul cried out in despair, ". . . I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing . . ." ([Rom. 7:18](#)). The sore of sin may be visible or invisible; it may be oozing blood and pus, or it may not appear on the surface, yet it is there. The uncleanness

in view here is in the thought life and the secret sins -- secret to man but open before God. "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom" ([Ps. 51:6](#)). This passage should humble the proud man and show how utterly disgusting he is in the light of God's presence. Listen to David: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest" ([Ps. 51:4](#)).

God has emphasized in His Word again and again that sin is exceedingly sinful. Read [Ezekiel 16:1-13](#) in which God makes it very clear to Israel that they had no virtues or attractions but were utterly disgusting to Him. They were polluted and their genealogy was bad. Or read the entire chapter of [Isaiah 59](#), where he says, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" ([v. 2](#))

Every bed, whereon he lieth that hath the issue, is unclean: and every thing, whereon he sitteth, shall be unclean.

And whosoever toucheth his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

And he that sitteth on any thing whereon he sat that hath the issue shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

And he that toucheth the flesh of him that hath the issue shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even [[Lev. 15:4-7](#)].

Everything he sits on, everything he touches is unclean.

God is concerned with the personal life of His people. His law reaches into the minute areas of their lives. He even watches over them while they are asleep! The man with an unclean issue contaminated the bed upon which he slept, and even his dreams were impure. Many a person spends a sleepless night, not counting sheep, but recalling his sins with lustful pleasure. God is interested in what we think when we lie upon our pillows. He wants to control our thought life. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" ([Phil. 4:8](#)).

God is interested in you! He is interested in you when you lie down and when you walk about. He is interested in what you touch. When we sit upon a chair in social conversation, God is interested in our conversation. Do we spread the virus of contamination? Also God is interested in our business and social contacts. Physical contact of the clean with the unclean always spreads the disease to the clean.

My friend, we cannot be with people or even just walk down the street without becoming soiled. We hear four-letter words, we see pictures, we are lured by advertising and propaganda. We are constantly soiled. We need to be aware of this and to confess our sin and to be cleansed by God. We all have this leprosy of sin, these running sores, these hidden sins.

And if he that hath the issue spit upon him that is clean; then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

And what saddle soever he rideth upon that hath the issue shall be unclean.

And whosoever toucheth any thing that was under him shall be unclean until the even: and he that beareth any of those things shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

And whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, and hath not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

And the vessel of the earth, that he toucheth which hath the issue, shall be broken: and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water [\[Lev. 15:8-12\]](#).

This gets down to where a person almost feels disgusted, but it reveals the nastiness of sin by contact. The former regulations had to do with conduct in the home and now this pertains to contact on the street or in a public place. Some of this we might call accidental contact.

We find this today. A believer often finds himself in a public place or on the street and some vile, dirty-minded person opens his mouth and spews out undiluted profanity and unspeakable blasphemy. This is contaminating. A believer may feel dirty after leaving such a group, and he is dirty. He needs to wash himself. That is the reason it is so very important for us to stay in the Word of God. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" ([Ps. 119:9](#)). We get dirty in this life!

Listen to these words of Jesus: ". . . If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" ([John 13:8](#)). This means we cannot have fellowship with the Lord Jesus if we are not washed by Him. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" ([John 15:3](#)). "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" ([John 17:17](#)).

And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean.

And on the eighth day he shall take to him two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the priest:

And the priest shall offer them, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD for his issue [\[Lev. 15:13-15\]](#).

Here, again, we have both the water and the blood introduced. The blood removes the guilt of sin and the water removes the stain of sin. The Holy Spirit must apply the sacrifice of Christ to those secret sins which are in our lives today.

Friend, do you see what this is describing? It is a sordid chapter, and yet we must confess that it is a picture of you and me. We need to confess and be cleansed of our secret sins. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" ([Ps. 32:5](#)). "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1John 1:9](#)).

And if any man's seed of copulation go out from him, then he shall wash all his flesh in water, and be unclean until the even.

And every garment, and every skin, whereon is the seed of copulation, shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the even.

The woman also with whom man shall lie with seed of copulation, they shall both bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the even [[Lev. 15:16-18](#)].

It is obvious that this is referring to venereal diseases. Today these diseases are like an epidemic. God guards against these social diseases. God is interested in the procreation of the race. God gave this gift to man for his good and inspiration, and so guards this system carefully. Man is always in danger of debasing himself in that which was to be one of the noblest experiences.

Our Lord teaches that unholy desires and lustful thoughts are to be avoided, for they are sin. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" ([Matt. 5:27-28](#)).

### **Running Issue Of The Woman (15:19-29)**

And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even.

And every thing that she lieth upon in her separation shall be unclean: every thing also that she sitteth upon shall be unclean.

And whosoever toucheth her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

And whosoever toucheth any thing that she sat upon shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

And if it be on her bed, or on any thing whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it, he shall be unclean until the even.

And if any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days; and all the bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean [[Lev. 15:19-24](#)].

These verses evidently refer to the uncleanness of a woman during her normal menstrual period. She was separated from her friends and her loved ones during this period. She was treated as an outcast and a leper ([Num. 5:2](#)). This seems to be unusually severe. The

only explanation we have to offer is that this is a reminder of the fall of man as recorded in Genesis. The penalty was death. Man is reminded that he had a bad beginning and has nothing in which to glory. Sinful man can produce only sin.

And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation: she shall be unclean.

Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue shall be unto her as the bed of her separation: and whatsoever she sitteth upon shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her separation.

And whosoever toucheth those things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

But if she be cleansed of her issue, then she shall number to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean.

And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons, and bring them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation [[Lev. 15:25-29](#)].

This section deals with an abnormal issue. This gives rules for her separation and the fact that she contaminates the bed she lies on and anyone who touches the things which she contaminates. It also explains the offering she is to bring when she is cleansed of her issue.

This gives us some insight into the plight of the woman with the issue of blood who came to Christ for healing ([Luke 8:43-48](#)). The Law had shut her out from contact with others, yet she touched Jesus. The Law had shut her out from the temple and from the public worship of God. The grace of our Lord healed her and restored her, and He commended her faith. Jesus is the fountain for the cleansing of the uncleanness of our hearts.

### **Repulsiveness And Regulations Of Running Issues (15:31-33)**

Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them.

This is the law of him that hath an issue, and of him whose seed goeth from him, and is defiled therewith;

And of her that is sick of her flowers, and of him that hath an issue, of the man, and of the woman, and of him that lieth with her that is unclean [[Lev. 15:31-33](#)].

Sexual sins are obviously under primary consideration in the closing verses of the chapter concerning running issues. It is referring to venereal disease, and death was the penalty for the failure to obey the commandments regulating running issues.

Hidden sin is not a trivial matter to God. Neither does He ignore the secret sins of believers. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth

in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" ([1Cor. 3:16-17](#)). We belong to God and we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Abuse of that temple can be a sin unto death. There is a sin unto death. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it" ([1John 5:16](#)). It is possible for a believer to commit a sin so that God takes him home. There is no use praying for him, because God is going to take him home. How do you know what that sin is? You don't know. But we are to remember that God deals with His own children in judgment when that is necessary. That does not mean that everyone who dies is taken home under judgment. Yet, there is a sin unto death and God calls His children home when they continue to be disobedient. The disobedience may be in the area of secret sins.

A mother may warn her little boy not to fight with the boy next door. She tells him that if they can't play without fighting, he must come into the house. She may issue this warning several times and each time she finds him fighting. Finally, she goes out and gets precious little Willie and leads him into the house. Little Willie says, "Mama, I don't want to come in," but into the house he goes! He doesn't want to come in, but neither will he obey. God is a good disciplinarian, by the way. Sometimes a child of His keeps on sinning and commits a sin unto death; so the Father just takes him on home.

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" ([Isa. 59:2](#)). The child of God needs to recognize this and he needs to confess his sin. There can be secret sins which the believer does not confess. If, then, God strikes him down, let us not blame God for it. The blame lies with the individual.

We are living in an age that has gone mad over sex. Sexual sins are rampant and venereal disease is becoming an epidemic. What a lesson we have in this chapter. I'm glad to close the page on this chapter because it is such an ugly picture. Yet, it is the picture of the human family and we are part of that family.

We will come now to the sixteenth chapter and it is like going out of darkness into light. We have come out of a tunnel and will enter the clear noonday sun.

## Chapter 16

**THEME:** The great Day of Atonement -- preparation of the priest; preparation of the place; preparation of the people

This chapter holds the greatest spiritual lesson for us. The subjects treated so far in Leviticus have been offerings, priests, and sin. None of these have dealt finally and completely with sin. We now come to that which more completely than any other deals with the subject of sin. It at least points more specifically and adequately to the work of Christ in redemption. It is a shadow of His redemptive work.

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" ([Col. 2:16-17](#)). A shadow is a picture. Although a picture is a poor

substitute for the real thing or the real person, it points to the reality. Years ago Hengstenberg commented, "The elucidation of the doctrine of types, now entirely neglected, is an important problem of future theologians." The picture, or type, of this great Day of Atonement merits our careful study.

Dr. Kellogg states the significance of the great Day of Atonement in this fashion: "[It] was perhaps the most important and characteristic in the whole Mosaic legislation." The rabbis designated the Day of Atonement with the simple word Yoma, "The Day." It was on this day that sin was dealt with in a more adequate way than in any other ceremony of the Mosaic system.

Notice in [verse 16](#), ". . . and because of their transgressions in all their sins." Then in [verse 22](#), "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities . . ." and in [verse 21](#), ". . . and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel. . ." He will make atonement for all their transgressions, all their iniquities, all their sins! This was the best that the Law had to offer until Christ should come.

The instructions and restrictions of this day grew out of the historical incident of the rebellion and disobedience of Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, when they intruded into the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle, and were immediately put to death by the direct judgment of God (chapter 10). Some writers treat these two chapters together.

The Day of Atonement was observed in the seventh month and on the tenth day. These numbers are significant in most of Scripture. The seventh is the sabbatic month and denotes rest and cessation from works. Surely it is not amiss that this month was chosen to set forth the rest of redemption that is in Christ. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his" ([Heb. 4:10](#)).

Ten is another prominent number in Scripture, and seems to convey the idea of that which expresses God's complete will and way. There were the Ten Commandments -- God could have given another, but He did not. God requested the tithe, the tenth, and the remnant of Israel is defined as a tenth ([Isa. 6:13](#)). Ten expresses God's mind and purpose. The tenth day expresses the truth that Christ came to do the will of God. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him, He hath put Him to grief. He came in the fullness of time, at the appointed hour.

The word for "atonement" is the Hebrew kaphar, which means "to cover." God did not take away sins in the Old Testament; He covered them until Christ came and removed them. There are a number of Scriptures which teach this. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at [overlooked]; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" ([Acts 17:30](#)). "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [that is, a mercy seat] through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" ([Rom. 3:24-25](#)). "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" ([Heb. 9:15](#)). "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that

could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience" ([Heb. 9:8-9](#)).

The Day of Atonement pointed to Christ and His redemption as did no other sacrifice, ceremony, or ordinance of the Old Testament. It reveals Christ, as our Great High Priest, going into the Holy of Holies for us.

### **Preparation Of The Priest (16:1-6)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died;

And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat [[Lev. 16:1-2](#)].

The instructions, ordinances, and rituals for the great Day of Atonement were made essential after the incident of the death of Nadab and Abihu, who intruded into the Holy Place and were slain by the direct judgment of God. The great Day of Atonement offered an explanation for the sudden death of these two men. The utter holiness of God and the utter sinfulness of man are made clear in this service.

There is a great gulf between God and man, but it is not fixed. Thank God for that! It has been bridged. Today God offers encouragement to man to come to Him but, my friend, you must come God's way. When you come God's way, you can come with boldness.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" ([Heb. 10:19-22](#)). "For through him [Christ Jesus] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" ([Eph. 2:18](#)). The invitation is to come. That means we are to come God's way. If we do, then we can come with great assurance.

You will notice that all this was done because these two sons of Aaron had intruded into the Holy of Holies. God now says, "You can't at all times come into My place." For us today it is different. We can come any time and any place and enter into the presence of God; that is, provided we come through Christ.

I actually think it is sinful for some people to pray. A minister who rejects Christ and who prays publicly to God, but does not come to God through Jesus Christ is coming to God in some other way which God will not accept. That is the son of Nadab and Abihu.

**Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.**

He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on [[Lev. 16:3-4](#)].

The unique and significant feature about this day was that the high priest alone performed the ritual. He had no assistance whatsoever. "And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place . . ." ([v. 17](#)). It was all his work, from the menial tasks to the high priestly offers. All the other priests retired from the tabernacle. He alone entered, for the work of atonement was his.

This is important to see because he pictured Christ. Christ was alone with the sins of the world. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" ([Ps. 22:1](#)). Christ was forsaken of both God and man when He was made sin for us. Nevertheless, He and the Father were in fellowship regarding the plan of salvation. "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" ([John 16:32](#)). This is a great mystery. ". . . God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself . . ." ([2Cor. 5:19](#)).

The high priest laid aside his garments of glory and beauty. He became attired in the same linen garb as the other priests. He washed himself and put on the linen garments only. He must be unadorned but pure.

This is a beautiful foreshadowing of Christ, our High Priest, who laid aside His glory and took upon Himself human flesh to die on the Cross. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. . . . No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" ([John 1:1, 14, 18](#)). Our LORD did not lay aside His deity, but He put aside His glory when He came down to this earth and became a man. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" ([Phil. 2:5-8](#)).

[And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.](#)

[And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house \[Lev. 16:5-6\].](#)

This gives the final personal preparation of Aaron for this all-important day. Aaron offered a sin offering for himself and his family and maybe included the entire tribe of Levi.

This phase of the great Day of Atonement finds no counterpart in the life and work of Christ. He had no sin. He was without sin. He did not die for Himself. He was made sin for us. He never made an offering for Himself. The offering of turtledoves which was brought to the temple when He was a baby was for the cleansing of Mary, His mother. It was to remind her that she was a sinner. There is no record of a sacrifice or an offering

for Jesus. But Aaron had to make an offering for himself first, and then he could make an offering for the people.

### **Preparation Of The Place (16:7-19)**

And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering.

But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself:

And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail:

And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not:

And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times [Lev. 16:7-14].

It is well to note here that the two goats constituted one sin offering. Each presented a distinct aspect of the remission of sin. One was offered as a sin offering. The other was taken into the wilderness.

The goat sent into the wilderness was called the scapegoat. The Hebrew word is lo-azazel. There has been some confusion as to its meaning. The word applies primarily to the goat and its destination into the wilderness. The view of the Septuagint, Luther, Kellogg, and Andrew Bonar is that it means an entire and utter removal. Edersheim gives it the meaning, "wholly to go away." It is definitely a part of the sin offering. One lot fell on the goat to be sent away and one lot fell on the goat to be offered.

Before anything was done to the goats, Aaron had to enter the Holy of Holies with the blood of the bullock for himself and for his house. So it is not exactly accurate to say that the high priest went in only one time. He went in on only one day of the year, but he went in twice on that day.

The brazen altar was in the outer court. The bullock for his sin offering would be slain as in any other sin offering. Something new is added at the conclusion of the offering. On

the way into the Holy of Holies, as he passed the laver, I am confident that he washed his hands and his feet. Then, in the Holy Place, he was to take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the golden altar of incense and with his hands full of sweet incense, he would place the incense upon the coals in the censer. When he passed the veil into the Holy of Holies, the cloud of smoke would fill the Holy of Holies. The ark and the mercy seat were in the Holy of Holies. He would take the blood of the bullock which he had brought in a basin with him, dip his finger into it, and sprinkle it before the mercy seat seven times. The blood made the top of the box a mercy seat. Seven times denotes a complete and adequate atonement.

I'm sure this was an awesome day for the high priest. He must perform accurately and meticulously in the presence of God. The slightest deviation would mean instant death. He probably rehearsed the ritual many times before the performance actually took place. As far as we know, no high priest ever died in the Holy of Holies. The only two who died were Nadab and Abihu.

Christ was made sin for us on the Cross. This is the counterpart to the brazen altar in the tabernacle. Then, as our Great High Priest, He entered into heaven and offered His own blood for our sins. Now the throne of God is a mercy seat for us. All of this is clearly taught us in [Hebrews 9](#) and [Hebrews 10](#). Whereas Aaron went with fear and trembling, we are bidden to come with boldness according to [Hebrews 4:16](#). Where he did not dare linger and could come only one day in the year, we are bidden to come constantly. Christ, our High Priest, carried His own blood and the sweet incense of His own intercession into heaven, and He is there today at God's right hand.

After Aaron had gone in for himself and his house, he was to go into the Holy of Holies for the people.

Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:

And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.

And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel [[Lev. 16:15-19](#)].

Now he is going in, not only for himself and his family, but for the children of Israel. This is done because of their transgressions and because of their uncleanness. The same ritual is followed in slaying the goat as in the slaying of the bullock for Aaron. He goes into the Holy of Holies as before, but now the atonement covers the Holy Place itself because of the contamination of Israel. Even the brazen altar itself must have the blood applied because this is where the sins of Israel were confessed and atoned; it is polluted because of the sin of the people.

All of this is to remind us of the One who died on the Cross for us. It is not the Cross that is important; the importance is in the One who died on the Cross. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" ([1Pet. 1:18-19](#)).

All of this revealed the inadequacy of the ritual of the blood of bulls and goats. "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" ([Heb. 9:23](#)). I believe that in heaven Jesus Christ literally offered His blood; that He bore it to the Holy of Holies of which the tabernacle Holy of Holies is but a pattern. Now I know some people don't like to hear of the blood, and they consider such a literal interpretation to be crude. You will notice that the apostle Peter calls it the "precious blood of Christ." I believe that the blood of Christ will be at the throne of God to remind us throughout the endless ages of eternity that our salvation was purchased at a tremendous price. Christ shed His blood on the Cross and then He presented His blood for your sins and my sins. We have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

### **Preparation Of The People (16:20-34)**

And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:

And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:

And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness [[Lev. 16:20-22](#)].

On this day the great high priest functioned alone. Aaron had sprinkled the blood of "the Lord's goat" on the mercy seat and now he places his bloody hands on the head of the live goat and confesses the sins of Israel. It must have been a sordid list of sins, but down the list he went. The laying on of hands denotes the fact that this goat is now identified as the sins of Israel.

Of Christ it is said, ". . . the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" ([Isa. 53:6](#)). "For he hath made him to be sin for us . . ." ([2Cor. 5:21](#)) is reality. Ambrose said, "The

thief knew that those wounds in the body of Christ were not the wounds of Christ, but of the thief."

Then Aaron put that goat into the hands of a man who had no personal interest in it, and Israelites were stationed at intervals to see that the job was done. The live goat finally disappeared into the wilderness, never to be seen or found again. The news that the goat was gone was relayed from station to station so that it was known a few minutes later in the temple.

Just as the news was passed from station to station, so the good news that Christ has taken away our sins has been passed from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to Paul the Apostle, then to the early church fathers, and finally to me and to you. Christ has put away our sins in a perfect and complete manner. The scapegoat illustrates several Scriptures in this connection: "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" ([Ps. 103:12](#)). "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" ([Isa. 38:17](#)). "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" ([Isa. 44:22](#)). "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve" ([Jer. 50:20](#)). "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will remember their sin no more" ([Jer. 31:34](#)).

What does the great Day of Atonement mean to the Christian? It is a holy day for us too. When the high priest is there with his bloody hands on the head of the goat, I think of my Lord on the Cross. John pointed Him out, ". . . Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" ([John 1:29](#)).

". . . If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1John 1:7](#)). Dean Law has well said, "Faith transfers our sins; Christ removes them; God forgets them."

And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there:

And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people [[Lev. 16:23-24](#)].

The ritual of the great Day of Atonement has now been completed. Without being irreverent, let me say that all that was left for Aaron to do was to wash up. This finds no counterpart in Christ. When His work was finished, He sat down at the right hand of God. Aaron did not dare enter the holy place for another year, but our Lord sits in the presence of the Father because there is no taint of sin upon Him now -- even though He bore all sins upon the tree.

[Verse 25](#) says that the fat of the sin offering is treated as a burnt offering. This protects the person of Christ from any implication of sin, even though He was made sin for us.

And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.

And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.

And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp [[Lev. 16:26-28](#)].

The one who led the goat into the wilderness was contaminated by contact with the live goat and must wash his clothes and bathe himself. The carcasses of the bullock and goat were taken without the camp and burned, and the people who did that had to wash themselves. I tell you, God was impressing these people with the fact they were sinners, lost sinners. He is showing that He is holy and that sin separates from God. Friends, we were separated from God by sin, but Christ died for us. He is the One who took away our sins when He entered into the Holy Place with His own blood.

And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:

For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments:

And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.

And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year.  
And he did as the LORD commanded Moses [[Lev. 16:29-34](#)].

The Day of Atonement is the only day of mourning and fasting which God gave His people. On this day you don't say, "Happy Yom Kippur" or "Merry Yom Kippur" because that is not the way the day is celebrated. It was the day to afflict the soul because of sin. It was mourning for sin. This is the basis for fasting in the Old Testament.

This day was to be observed until the permanent and eternal sacrifice for sin came. It was fulfilled by Christ in His death.

"Man of Sorrows!" what a name  
For the Son of God who came  
Ruined sinners to reclaim!  
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!  
Bearing shame and scoffing rude,  
In my place condemned He stood;  
Sealed my pardon with His blood;  
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!  
Guilty, vile and helpless, we;  
Spotless Lamb of God was He:  
"Full atonement!" can it be?  
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!  
"Lifted up" was He to die,  
"It is finished," was His cry;  
Now in heav'n exalted high;  
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!  
When He comes, our glorious King,  
All His ransomed home to bring,  
Then anew this song we'll sing:  
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!  
-- P. P. Bliss

## Chapter 17

**THEME:** One place of sacrifice; the offense of occult goat worship; the offering of sacrifice at the tabernacle; the obligation not to eat blood

Leviticus is an exciting book as it is unfolding and opening up great basic and bedrock truths for the Christian today. Though these things were given to the nation Israel in a literal way, and though the reason for doing these things has passed away, yet all of this contains great spiritual lessons for us today. It answers many questions and gives new insights for the understanding and appreciation of the New Testament. I rejoice that many are coming to a personal relationship with Christ through the study of Leviticus.

Some people treat this chapter as an extension of the previous chapter. There is a sequence here, it is true, but the subject is different. Consideration is now given to the one place of sacrifice and the value of the blood.

This chapter had direct application to the wilderness march and the period that Israel was camped about the tabernacle. It has to do with ethical rather than ceremonial considerations. Clean domestic animals for food were to be slain at the tabernacle. Only [verses 8](#) and 9 in this chapter have to do specifically with the ceremonial offering of a sacrifice to God.

After Israel was scattered throughout the land of Palestine, some of them lived a hundred or more miles from the tabernacle. It would not have been feasible or even possible for them to bring the animals they were to use for food and slay them at the tabernacle. In

Deuteronomy God revised these instructions to them when they were ready to enter the land ([Deut. 12:15-16, 20-25](#)).

Why did God give such instructions? Israel was fresh out of Egypt where they had been surrounded by idolatry. They had worshiped the idols of Egypt, and there was always the danger of lapsing back to idolatry. They had worshiped the nature gods of Egypt. In [verse 7](#) the word translated "devils" is actually seirim which means "hairy one" and refers to goats. The Egyptians worshiped Mendes, the goat god, and the Greeks worshiped the goat god as Pan -- familiar to us from Greek literature and art depicted with tail, horns, and cloven feet. Medieval Christianity then identified this form as the devil. We get our word panic from this period of time when it described the terror that the Devil caused.

From this we see that Israel was forbidden to kill any animal in any place but the tabernacle in order to prevent them from making it an offering to Pan, the goat god.

Then, we learn that under no circumstance was the blood to be eaten. The reason is given specifically: it represents the life. There is a twofold reason behind this. (1) Life is sacred -- even animals are not to be slain needlessly. (2) Blood speaks of the sacrifice of Christ. It was the means of expiation, the symbol of reconciliation, and the type of the one great vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. Life is sacred and must be protected, but Christ must give His life so that the sinner can have life. Blood and life are synonymous. Man was never to eat blood. But he is to "drink the blood of Christ," which means to appropriate by faith in the shed blood of Christ the life of Christ which He gave up so that we might live. Let us love, praise, and talk about the blood. Too often, even in our churches, there is a soft-pedal placed on the topic of sin. My friend, it always follows that when there is a hesitation to mention sin, there is an equal playing down of the precious blood of Christ.

A famous preacher who came to Washington years ago was approached by a dowager who said, "Doctor, I do hope that you will not talk too much about the blood, as our former preacher did." His answer was enlightening, "Madam, I will not say too much about the blood." She interrupted, "I am so glad to hear that!" Then he added, "It is impossible to say too much about the blood!"

### **The One Place Of Sacrifice (17:1-6)**

[And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,](#)

[Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them; This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, saying \[Lev. 17:1-2\].](#)

These instructions were not for Moses and Aaron alone, but they were also for the sons of Aaron and for the entire nation of Israel. It is obvious that God is reaching now into the personal and private lives of the people. He not only made a difference between the clean and the unclean animals in chapter 11, but now He puts down the regulations by which they were to eat the clean animals. The lives of His people are to be different from the heathen round about them. They are told that again in the next chapter, as we shall see ([Lev. 18:3](#)).

What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp,

And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people:

To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them for peace offerings unto the LORD.

And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD [[Lev. 17:3-6](#)].

This is another of those strange laws and it does not concern the ceremonial offering of sacrifices. When you look at it carefully, you will note that these animals were for food for God's people. In other words, God is demanding that they bring Him to the dinner table! By this token, the heathen gods were shut out.

Why was God so strict about this? If they were going to have a lamb for dinner, they had to bring it to the door of the tabernacle to slay it. Maybe some of them didn't want their neighbors to know they were having company. Maybe some of them forgot to invite their mother-in-law for dinner. All this made no difference. They must slay the animal at the tabernacle. This was done because of their background. You see, among the heathen the meat was offered to an idol before it was eaten. God was putting up a roadblock to hinder His people from taking the long road to idolatry, spiritual darkness, and judgment.

When they lived down in Egypt, even though they were in slavery, they were idolaters just like the Egyptians. God did not redeem them because they were superior. God redeemed them because He had heard their cry and because He had made a promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. When God makes a covenant, He keeps it. How do I know they were idolaters in Egypt? Because Scripture says they were. "In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands: Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt" ([Ezek. 20:6-8](#)). God is trying to break them from that sordid background in the land of Egypt. They had worshiped animals, and the shedding of blood and the offering of the meat were used in idolatry.

One needs to understand this background to get the significance of Paul's injunctions to the Corinthians in [1Corinthians 8:1-13](#) and [1Corinthians 10:1-33](#). The Corinthians were idolatrous and they brought their animal and offered it to their idols. They left their

animal there; the meat was taken into the temple and sold in the meat market there. The best filet mignon of that day would have been bought at the heathen temple; it was the local supermarket. By the time of the New Testament, the godly Israelite had been so schooled that he refused to buy this meat that had been offered to idols. The converted Gentiles didn't have any qualms about eating the meat that had been offered to idols, realizing that the idol was nothing. But the Jewish Christian didn't like to eat with the gentile Christian because of this difference over meat offered to idols. This chapter in Leviticus, you see, gives the background for the passage to the Corinthians.

It is interesting to note that when the great Council of Jerusalem handed down the decision, James spoke for the group and said, "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood" ([Acts 15:19-20](#)). God was teaching the gentile believers that life is sacred.

May I mention here that the slaughter of animals for food is still associated with heathen worship among the Hindus and in Persia.

Actually, the children of Israel had very little meat to eat in the wilderness. I think the incident concerning the quail indicated that. They complained because they didn't have any meat to eat and cried, ". . . Who shall give us flesh to eat?" ([Num. 11:4](#)). This was true of all nations of antiquity, and even today nations in the East are short on meat. Some are actually vegetarian in their diets.

A clean animal for food for the table was to be killed at the door of the tabernacle. The blood would be poured out there. The blood was placed upon the altar, and the fat was offered as a sweet savour. The sacrifice was a peace offering. The remainder of the animal was returned to the owner, and he could prepare it for his table. You can see why the Jewish believers resented the Gentiles eating meat bought at a heathen temple.

### **The Offense Of Occult Goat Worship (17:7)**

*And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a-whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations [[Lev. 17:7](#)].*

I have already mentioned that the word devils in this verse is literally "hairy ones," or goats. The same word is used in [2Chronicles 11:15](#): "And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils [literally, goats], and for the calves which he had made." That is how Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, made Israel to sin.

This refers to nature worship, degrading and licentious, associated with the god Pan. God is saying to His people, "Don't you do that! You bring that animal to the door of the tabernacle." This is why there was the severe penalty as stated in the fourth verse. The details had to be changed when they entered into the land, but the principle that is taught here is eternal.

This is very, very important for us to see today. They lived under the danger of returning to idolatry and to gross immorality, and right now we are experiencing a return to this

matter of nature worship. My friend, all this business today of going back to primitive living is a return to the same sort of thing. God wanted to protect them and wants to protect us from idolatry and immorality.

### **The Offering Of Sacrifice At The Tabernacle (17:8-9)**

And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice,

And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people [[Lev. 17:8-9](#)].

God is specific about bringing an animal for their own food or bringing it for an offering. God did not let them present an animal as an offering and then take it home to eat. Now, in these two verses, He is talking about bringing an animal for a burnt offering. When the animal was brought as an offering, they had to make the offering according to the law of the burnt offering. There was only one place for sacrifice. The Lord repeated this again and again in order to deter Israel from idolatry.

It was applicable to the strangers and foreigners who had established residence in Israel. There was always the danger of the influence from the presence of the heathen in their midst. The tendency was to resort to the ways of the heathen rather than to win them over to the Lord.

We are told today, "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry" ([1Cor. 10:14](#)). And again, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" ([2Cor. 6:14-17](#)).

This is a great principle which is carried over to the church. There is a danger of association with the unbeliever in religion, politics, marriage, business, or social life. God has placed a warning about this in His Word.

### **The Obligation Not To Eat Blood (17:10-14)**

And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul [[Lev. 17:10-11](#)].

I consider [verse 11](#) one of the key verses of this book. The life is in the blood. This is restated in [verse 14](#). This is the basis of all sacrifice.

Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.

For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off [[Lev. 17:12-14](#)].

Jesus Christ said something very interesting. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him" ([John 6:54-56](#)). Because the life of the flesh is in the blood, Jesus is saying that we are to accept His shed blood for our sins by faith and then we receive life. Jesus shed His blood and gave His life. The life is in the blood.

This is a great, eternal truth. This explains why Abel's sacrifice was more excellent than Cain's. It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. The blood of Christ is the only thing that can wash away sin. There is nothing offensive about the blood; the offense is in our sin.

What can wash away my sin?  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;  
What can make me whole again?  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
Oh! precious is the flow  
That makes me white as snow;  
No other fount I know,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

## Chapter 18

**THEME:** Immorality condemned, amplification of the seventh commandment -- preamble to social prohibitions; sexual relations with relatives forbidden; sundry sexual sins prohibited; offspring forbidden to be offered to Molech; perversion of sex prohibited; nations in Palestine cast out for committing these sins

Up to this point the laws concerning ceremonial cleansing have been given. The rules regulated the ritual of religion. In [Lev. 18](#), [19](#), and [Lev. 20](#), we find a special section which applies the Ten Commandments to life situations. God is now dealing with the moral aspects of the lives of His people. Friends, we are getting right down to the nitty-gritty.

This section opens with a preamble [Isa 18:1-5](#) and closes with a formal postscript at the close of chapter 20. These are very important because they give the reason for the restrictions and regulations of the social life of His people.

We are living in a day when the moral foundations have been broken up and removed. "Who makes the rules, and what is right and wrong?" asks the sneering skeptic. This preamble and postscript give us a twofold explanation:

(1) Three times in the preamble, [verses 2, 4](#), and 5, the Word says, "I am the LORD." God makes the rules! Breaking the Ten Commandments is wrong because God says it is wrong. (2) The postscript gives the second reason. "And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine" ([Lev. 20:26](#)). God demands that His people be holy. Purity in all life's situations is the command of God.

This chapter deals with the seventh commandment primarily. It spells out in detail what is meant by adultery. Sexual sins are the subject. These are the sins which mark a decadent society and the decline and fall of empires.

### **Preamble To Social Prohibitions (18:1-5)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LORD your God.

After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do; neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.

Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God.

Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD [[Lev. 18:1-5](#)].

They have just come out of Egypt, and there they had done all these things which are forbidden. The disgusting sins which will be mentioned were a way of life for the Egyptians. God has to separate His people from the influence of that sinful environment. They were going to the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. But that isn't all that was in Canaan -- the Canaanites were there, and they also were immoral. God saw that the children of Israel were caught, as we would say, between the devil and the deep blue sea, or between a rock and a hard place. The Egyptians were behind them, the Canaanites were ahead of them, and both of them were grossly immoral.

We are living in a day when they talk about a sexual revolution. I wonder whether people have read the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus. May I say to you, there is nothing new about sexual perversion at all. It is the same old immorality that they had in Egypt and in Canaan.

God says, "I am the LORD your God," and "I the LORD." Who makes the rules? God makes the rules. Maybe someone says, "But I don't want to follow them." Well, that is up to you, but God still makes the rules! Breaking the Ten Commandments is wrong because God says it is wrong. That ought to be enough to satisfy the heart of the child of God. The skeptic would not be satisfied with any argument since he makes his own rules, and he is his own god.

By the way, if you can create a whole universe -- and you will need a whole planetary system with a sun and a moon and a few stars -- then you can make your own ten commandments. But as long as you are living in God's world, breathing His air, using His sunshine, drinking His water, walking on His earth, and not even paying rent for it, you had better obey His commands. He tells us that if we break His commandments, we will pay for it. And, my friend, you will pay! You may not be arrested by the local police, but you will stand before Him some day.

The things that God said were immoral are still immoral today. Listen to the New Testament: "Not in the lust of concupisence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" ([1Thess. 4:5-7](#)). "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over into lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" ([Eph. 4:17-19](#)). "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" ([1Cor. 5:11](#)). "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" ([2Pet. 1:4](#)).

These passages from the Epistles of the New Testament are speaking to you and to me. The child of God in any age is called to holy living. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" ([1Cor. 3:16-17](#)). "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" ([Eph. 1:4](#)). "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" ([1Pet. 1:16](#)). God is calling us to holiness. We need to emphasize holiness. God asks us to be holy.

There is another truth that I do not want you to miss, friends. Many folk say that if you are going to reach the crowds, you've got to go down and live with them. You've got to be like they are. This has been tried, both by individuals and by groups. And do you know what? They don't reach the crowd; they become a part of the crowd. May I say to you, God has called us to holiness. Folk who have really reached men for Christ have been those whose lives commended the gospel they preached. For example, England was a pretty wicked place during the eighteenth century, and they called the followers of John Wesley, "holy people." In fact, they gave them the name "Methodists" because their methods were different from the methods of the world.

God says, "I am Jehovah." Someone may say, "Well, I'm not a Christian, and I'm just not interested." May I say to you that God is declaring His sovereignty. God created this universe and He is the One who is running it. And He says, "I am your God." He is a reconciled God. He knows our frame and yet He loves us. Friend, if you are reconciled to

God, you will want to please Him. The child of God can be filled with the Holy Spirit so that he will not commit these sins of the flesh, but will produce the fruit of the Spirit.

## **Sexual Relations With Relatives Forbidden (18:6-16)**

None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD [[Lev. 18:6](#)].

The blanket statement is made that no person is to have sexual relations with a near relative. This entire section amplifies the seventh commandment. Here it refers to anyone who has the same blood relationship as the other person. Now it goes on. God is specific. And the reason He gives is, "I am the LORD."

The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she is thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness [[Lev. 18:7-8](#)].

This warns against disgusting incest. Yet this sin was in the Corinthian church. Paul condemned it with great feeling. "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife" ([1Cor. 5:1](#)).

These are things that are talked about today, aren't they? Well, God talks about them, too. Don't tell me things are different today. God has spelled out exactly what is sin. Nobody can make a mistake about this, friends.

The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.

The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs is thine own nakedness.

The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she is thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she is thy father's near kinswoman.

Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she is thy mother's near kinswoman.

Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she is thine aunt.

Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter-in-law: she is thy son's wife: thou shalt not uncover her nakedness [[Lev. 18:9-15](#)].

The different human relationships which are established by blood or marriage are dealt with specifically in this section. Relatives are thrown together in a domestic situation in which adultery could be practiced. God put up these barriers to prevent this.

Egypt practiced these sins, especially those mentioned in [verse 9](#). The Pharaohs and the Ptolemies practiced intermarriage of brother and sister.

In the beginning, there was no law against this. Cain and Seth had to marry their own sisters. Abraham married his half sister. However the Law now halts this practice.

**Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it is thy brother's nakedness [[Lev. 18:16](#)].**

There is an exception to this verse and that is in the law of the kinsman-redeemer as stated in [Deuteronomy 25:5-10](#).

### **Sundry Sexual Sins Prohibited (18:17-20)**

**Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; for they are her near kinswomen: it is wickedness.**

**Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time [[Lev. 18:17-18](#)].**

This relationship is not by blood, but by marriage. Because of the close relationship of the wife to a daughter or son, any marriage is forbidden. Evidently both of these verses have reference to having two wives at the same time. It is labeled incest here, instead of bigamy. Notice the Berkeley Version on these two verses: "Do not expose the nakedness of both a woman and her daughter; neither take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to expose her; they are blood relatives. It is incest. While your wife is still living do not take her sister for a rival to expose her nakedness" ([Lev. 18:17-18](#)).

This was the problem poor Jacob faced in having two sisters as wives -- Leah and Rachel. The story of this family was certainly not a happy one. Remember, however, that Jacob lived before the Ten Commandments had been given.

**Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness [[Lev. 18:19](#)].**

Lawful marital relations of a husband and wife were forbidden at certain times. The sensual mind must be made subject to the Law of God.

**Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her [[Lev. 18:20](#)].**

Believe me, God is throwing up these bulwarks to protect the home from the licentious practices of the heathen round about them. The family on earth was to mirror the family in heaven ([Eph. 3:15](#)). Purity of living was to be the badge of God's family. There was a holy place in the tabernacle for worship; the home was a holy place in the nation for

living. The New Testament also has a great deal about this. It would be well to read [1Corinthians 7](#) in this connection.

### **Offspring Forbidden To Be Offered To Molech (18:21)**

And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD [[Lev. 18:21](#)].

"Thy seed" means their children. This verse may seem to be out of place in this chapter, but the pagan worship of Molech was closely related with sex. The image of old Molech was heated red hot, and the bodies of children were placed in its arms. It is hard to imagine the horror of this. There are those who believe that such a thing could never have happened. However, the Scriptures make other references to this same practice. ". . . and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim" ([2Kings 17:31](#)). "And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart" ([Jer. 7:31](#)). This terrible practice profanes the holy name of God ([Lev. 20:3](#)). The unnatural brutality of this pagan rite was a deep profaning of the name of the true God. God's love of children is evident in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. The Lord Jesus said, "Let them come to Me."

### **Perversion Of Sex Prohibited (18:22-23)**

Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination [[Lev. 18:22](#)].

It is hard to believe that right here in downtown Los Angeles, a church put on a dance for sexual perverts. I am told they had over 700 people at that dance. It was so disgusting that a hard-boiled newspaper writer went down to write it up, but walked out. Yet a "church" engaged in that. My friend, God condemns it! In the Old Testament He condemns it; in the New Testament He condemns it. "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" ([Rom. 1:24-28](#)).

The depravity that is mentioned here is common today. The United States is like Sodom and Gomorrah. It makes me weep to see the way my country is going. I love this country. It's the land of my birth. I hate to see these dirty, filthy, immoral people bringing us into judgment. Believe me, friends, the judgment of God is already upon us today. We can't have peace abroad and we can't have peace at home, Why not? "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked" ([Isa. 48:22](#)).

Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion [Lev. 18:23].

This is indeed unspeakable. This was practiced in the fertility cults and nature worship. Licentiousness is always connected with idolatry in the most debased fashion. And if you think this is not being practiced today, then you should talk to the police department in a city like Los Angeles. They can tell you.

### **Nations In Palestine Cast Out For Committing These Sins (18:24-30)**

Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:

And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants [Lev. 18:24-25].

The nations in Palestine were cast out because they committed these abominable and atrocious sins. That is the reason they were put off the land. A lot of soft-hearted and soft-headed preachers today weep because God put out the Canaanites. Here is the reason God put them out. God couldn't tolerate what was taking place. The land of the Canaanites was eaten up with venereal disease. Why do you suppose God told them not to take even a wedge of gold or to touch a garment in the city of Jericho? They were guilty of the vilest sins imaginable. Don't you think that God put them out for a good reason? After all, if the tenant doesn't pay rent, he can be put out. God happened to own that land.

My friend that is the way you and I occupy this earth down here. Our "three score years and ten" is just a lease. The land is God's. It is His business and it would be well for us to make His business our business. His business is the one that will prevail.

Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you:

(For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)

That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.

For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people.

Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God [Lev. 18:26-30].

God gives a double warning to His people that if they pursue a pattern similar to those who preceded them in the land, the same judgment, if not worse, would befall them. God's land must be holy. God's ultimate goal is that righteousness will cover the earth.

## Chapter 19

**THEME:** Man's relationship to God; man's relationship to the poor; man's relationship to his neighbour; man's relationships in different life situations

We are in that section of the book where the Ten Commandments are explained in terms of the social life of the nation. I can't think of anything more practical than this particular section. God's law is to tell us this one thing: ". . . Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy" ([Lev. 19:2](#)). This was fundamental and basic to all facets of the life of Israel. It explained everything which God commanded or demanded. It entered into the web and woof of their daily routine. Holiness in daily life with all of its relationships was paramount in the everyday living of God's people. That is something that needs to be reemphasized today, by the way. This is not just theory. God intended it to be brought right into our lives.

The law cannot produce the holiness which it demands. It demanded, but it did not supply. It revealed the righteousness of the law, but the high level which it demanded could not be attained by human effort. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" ([Rom. 3:19-20](#)).

How wonderful it is that God has given us His Holy Spirit to indwell us. This is the dynamic that is needed for Christian living.

The reason given in this chapter, "I am the LORD your God" or "I am the LORD" occurs sixteen times in this chapter. God draws the line between right and wrong. He alone makes the sharp distinction between the holy and unholy. No other reason needs to be given.

### **Man's Relationship To God (19:1-8)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy [[Lev. 19:1-2](#)].

God gives these instructions to Moses the lawgiver, and they amplify a portion of the Ten Commandments. God exacts holy conduct on the basis that He is holy. It is well to note that God still enjoins the same conduct today. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" ([1Cor. 10:31](#)). "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" ([2Cor. 5:17](#)). "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" ([1Pet. 1:13-16](#)).

The major difference between the conduct required under law and under grace is that today the dynamic is supplied to the believer in the person of the Holy Spirit. We are joined to the living Christ. Old things have passed away. We are no longer joined to Adam, and we are no longer joined to a legal system. We are joined to Christ and we are to seek to please Him. You see, under the Law they tried to keep the commandments by their own effort. They were to learn that the flesh will always fail. In contrast to this, we have the Spirit of God in us. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" ([Rom. 8:3-4](#)). "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Gal. 5:22-23](#)). The Law never went as far as this. The Son of God wants to bring us up to a high plane.

Now, in emphasizing certain of the commandments they were to keep, God will emphasize those particular areas in which they were weak. The history of Israel will show us that God understood their weak points. They were instructed about the Sabbath, the avoidance of idolatry, the bringing of proper offerings to God. These are areas in which they later broke down. God is asking them to be holy in their daily life.

[Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God \[Lev. 19:3\].](#)

One might think it is strange that God should begin with the commandment to honor father and mother. But it is not so strange when we consider that the parent stands in the place of God for the child and that the child learns to obey God by first obeying the parent. When you are going to get down to the nitty-gritty, you must begin at home.

Then He adds, "And keep my sabbaths." God demanded one-seventh of man's time as well as one-tenth of his possessions.

These two commandments mentioned first encompass the two major divisions of the Ten Commandments. There is duty to man and duty to God. The Lord Jesus Christ summed it all up as love to God and love to man. He said this is the sum total of the law ([Matt. 22:36-40](#)).

The Sabbath law does not rest upon a moral basis but was an arbitrary command of God given to Israel. Israel, in apostasy and decline, sinned at this point. They refused to observe the sabbaths. "Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?" ([Amos 8:5](#)). This was God's charge and case against the nation.

[Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I am the LORD your God \[Lev. 19:4\].](#)

This covers the first two commandments. The thought here is not even to cast a glance at idolatry. Heathen worship appealed to the eye with its pomp and ceremony. It still does. Look at the pageantry and meaningless rituals that you see in religion today. It is "eye

service." They were not to look on idols and they were not to make idols. God ridicules the idols because they are nothing and can do nothing.

And if ye offer a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, ye shall offer it at your own will.

It shall be eaten the same day ye offer it, and on the morrow: and if aught remain until the third day, it shall be burnt in the fire.

And if it be eaten at all on the third day, it is abominable: it shall not be accepted.

Therefore every one that eateth it shall bear his iniquity, because he hath profaned the hallowed thing of the LORD: and that soul shall be cut off from among his people [[Lev. 19:5-8](#)].

There is nothing new added here. However, we should point out again that the peace offering was to be made voluntarily. Even though it was a voluntary offering, the offerer was not relieved from following scrupulously the rules that were prescribed. Any deviation from the prescribed order penalized the man as an example to the people.

I find today that there are those in Christian service who seem to think they can take special liberties that no one else can take. Or some people think that because they have given a large contribution to the church they should have special privileges and special attention. Notice that the peace offering was given voluntarily, but the detail had to be followed through meticulously. We must all come to God on God's terms. Any deviation from the prescribed order penalized the man as an example to the people. This was a positive law, not a moral law. Because of that, there was the more danger of failure. How many people today make a pledge to the church and then feel that they don't need to go through with it if they don't wish to. God says, "If you are going to do it voluntarily, then do it right."

I had to go out to a television station to make a tape to be aired locally. They were taping a very popular program and so I stayed to watch. I was so impressed by the dedication of the people who were putting it on that I stayed a long time to watch and someone might ask me why I did that. Well, I've been among Christians so long that it did me good to get among people who were dedicated. Of course I understand why they are dedicated -- they are dedicated to greed. They were being paid a handsome sum to do that show, but I'll tell you, they gave it everything they had.

Too many Christians excuse what they are doing by saying it is just volunteer work. God may say, "If you are going to do it, then do it right when you come to Me." Don't volunteer to do God's work unless you are going to give it everything you have. I'm of the opinion there will be a lot of Christians judged someday because of their laziness. Some folk glory in the fact they took a job. "Look, I taught a Sunday school class." My friend, how many times were you late? How many times did you fail to prepare the lesson? I tell you, the crowd in the television show knew their parts. But I see Sunday school teachers flipping through the quarterly, trying to find something to say. I think God is going to judge us on that someday. He tells us not to come to Him with a voluntary offering unless we come the right way.

## **Man's Relationship To The Poor (19:9-10)**

And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God [[Lev. 19:9-10](#)].

This was God's marvelous provision for the poor. God did not put anyone on charity. He never let anyone sit down and do nothing and receive a welfare check. The poor were taken care of by being given the opportunity to work. This was a marvelous balance between heartless capitalism and godless socialism. Whatever a farmer did not reap his first time around must be left for the poor. The ancient method of harvesting by hand left 10 percent to 20 percent of the grain in the field. The same law applied to their vineyards. I was at a meeting in Turlock, California, and a man told me to go out to the vineyard and help myself to the grapes because he knew how I loved grapes. It was after the harvest and the pickers were all gone. I could have filled a truck with grapes if I had had one there. That night at the meeting I told the folk that I had been out gleaning. That is the way God took care of His people. His method of dealing with poverty enabled both rich and poor to acknowledge the good hand of God.

## **Man's Relationship To His Neighbor (19:11-18)**

Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.

And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD [[Lev. 19:11-12](#)].

This restates the eighth and ninth commandments. "Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" ([Exod. 20:15-16](#)). Stealing, defrauding, lying, and perjury are all included here. To deal falsely is a form of stealing according to God's definition.

The third commandment is included in [verse 12](#). God's name is holy. In business God's man is to demonstrate the holiness of God's name by his honest and true business dealings.

**Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning [[Lev. 19:13](#)].**

We are to pay any man working for us. May I say to you, I think God would be on the side of labor. My dad was a working man and I remember him in overalls more than any other way. He built cotton gins in Texas and many times, I found out, he was beaten financially. Listen to James: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten" ([James 5:1-2](#)). [Verse 6](#) of the same chapter goes on to say, "Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." Godless labor is a terrible thing and so is godless capitalism. Right now I think we are in real danger from the latter.

**Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD [Lev. 19:14].**

A blind man told me how he was cheated by a salesman who came to him. May I say to you, these terrible things are still done today. God put a double emphasis on His name in consideration of the deaf and blind. It is God's concern for the weak, helpless, and infirm, and it is His rebuke against the hardheartedness of man.

**Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour [Lev. 19:15].**

Here is a word for the judge sitting on the bench, and how our judges need this word today! The judge on the bench is to understand that he is to judge as God judges. I wish some of them would remember that they are in that position, not because some politician put them there, but because they represent Almighty God. And they are to judge impartially.

Shakespeare wrote in King Henry VIII: "Heaven is above all yet; there sits a judge that no king can corrupt." Socrates said, "Four things belong to a judge, to hear courteously, to answer wisely, to consider soberly, and to decide impartially."

**Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD.**

**Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.**

**Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD [Lev. 19:16-18].**

Talebearing is slander. It is best to remain silent if to tell the truth will ruin a neighbor.

Sir Walter Scott wrote, "Low breathed talkers, minion lispers cutting honest throats by whispers." Someone else has said, "You cannot believe everything you hear, but you can repeat it." James has a great deal to say about this, and I wrote a little booklet on his epistle called Tongues on Fire. Do you know what tongues on fire is? It is the little tongue that is in your mouth. It is an awful thing. It is the most dangerous thing in the world, more dangerous than an atom bomb.

"Stand against the blood" means to murder. Hatred is not put on a par with murder, but it is forbidden. Our Lord linked them together and said that if you hate, you are a murderer ([Matt. 5:21-22](#)).

The answer to all these negative prohibitions is found in the positive, "But thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Paul summed up all this for the Christian: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" ([Gal. 6:1](#)).

## **Man's Relationships In Different Life Situations (19:19-37)**

Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee [Lev. 19:19].

Do you know what happens when you wash such a garment? God is teaching them great spiritual truths with symbols and ceremonies. They were not to have hybrid animals and plants. This was to teach them that there is to be no mingling of truth and error. This is brought out by our Lord's parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13). Paul says, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1Cor. 10:21). Christ said, ". . . Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13).

And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, even a ram for a trespass offering.

And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he hath done: and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him [Lev. 19:20-22].

This goes back to the seventh commandment. This protects the bond-woman. This raises the natural question, "Is God lending approval to slavery?" No. God is recognizing the sinful situation caused by the hard hearts of men, just as He did in the case of divorce (Matt. 19:8). It was recognized as a sin on the part of the man, for he had to bring a trespass offering. The woman did not bring an offering.

And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you: it shall not be eaten of.

But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the LORD withal.

And in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof: I am the LORD your God [Lev. 19:23-25].

This law seems strange to those of us who are not dendrologists. We are told, however, that young fruit trees will grow faster and yield better fruit if the buds are nipped off (circumcised) the first few years. The Lord knew that. The spiritual lesson was that the first fruits belong to God. And it taught that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights . . ." (James 1:17).

Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood: neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times.

Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.

Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD [[Lev. 19:26-28](#)].

There are six commandments here that condemn the practices and superstitions of the heathen. They were not to eat flesh with the blood in it. They were not to trim their hair and leave little tufts of it. They were not to act like the heathen when a loved one dies.

Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness [[Lev. 19:29](#)].

This is a condemnation of a heathen practice which prevails to this day among some people. I have read that men in this country go through college with the money their wives earn as harlots. How terrible!

Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD [[Lev. 19:30](#)].

The Sabbath was a sign of the relationship between God and the children of Israel, and it was to be observed strictly. This is brought out in detail in [Exodus 31:13-17](#).

Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God [[Lev. 19:31](#)].

This is one of the many warnings against spiritism and demonism. The supernatural and satanic character of this practice is recognized in the Scriptures and rejected.

Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD [[Lev. 19:32](#)].

Respect is to be shown old age. This also is repeated in the Scriptures.

And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.

But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God [[Lev. 19:33-34](#)].

The stranger among them was to be treated kindly and was to be loved. He was a reminder to them that they were strangers in Egypt. The stranger was a neighbor.

Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure.

Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt [[Lev. 19:35-36](#)].

Business transactions were to be honest. Measures and weights were to be honest. God's children are to be different from others because they represent God even in their business dealings.

**Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I am the LORD [Lev. 19:37].**

God is the Lord. That is reason enough for obedience to what He commands. Can you think of anything to add to that?

## Chapter 20

**THEME:** Capital punishment for those who offer their children to Molech; capital punishment for those who practice spiritism; capital punishment for those who curse father or mother; capital punishment for those who commit adultery; certain offenses which require lesser penalty; conclusion to the law of holiness

Dr. Andrew A. Bonar, in his book on Leviticus, calls this chapter "Warnings Against the Sins of the Former Inhabitants." In other words, these were the sins of the Canaanites.

It appears that the death penalty was exacted for breaking any one of the Ten Commandments. Not all of them are listed here under the penal code for the death penalty. Only a few are given as examples. For example, murder is not listed in this chapter, but we learn elsewhere about the death penalty for it. For this reason I infer that the penalty for breaking any of the Ten Commandments was death.

God instituted capital punishment! He is just and righteous, and He applied the death penalty with unsparing severity.

Nowhere in the Word of God is punishment given for the purpose of reforming the criminal. That was not the objective. Punishment of a crime is for the moral good of the people. Punishment of a crime is a deterrent to crime. It will cut down the crime rate. One of the reasons for the spread of lawlessness like a dreadful plague throughout this land is due to the fact that we have weak judges who will not enforce the law.

We hear a great many sob sisters cry about the death penalty. God instituted capital punishment for good and sufficient reasons. There must be the satisfaction of outraged justice. Justice and righteousness demand punishment. The majesty, law, and holiness of God have been outraged, and so crime must be punished.

If you don't believe in the death penalty, let me ask you a question. Do you mean to say that you are better than God? God makes no apology for the death penalty. Listen to Him: "So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth that land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it" ([Num. 35:33](#)). Remember that the Books of Matthew and Luke tell us that the blood of Abel cries out from the ground.

Let me ask you another question. Suppose a sadistic criminal took your little child by the heels and dashed his head against a stone. What would you think should be done to him? I'm talking about yours now, not the children of someone else in another state. It's easy to

be theoretical and ideal as long as it doesn't involve you. Here in California a man raped a girl and killed the fellow she was with. A crowd was parading at the governor's mansion and parading at the penitentiary, protesting the death sentence. What about the girl? She is in a mental institution, a raving maniac. Her parents believe in capital punishment. I tell you, when you are talking about your own, that changes the color of the picture altogether. God says these people should be punished.

Modern man in his efforts to be soft has abolished the death penalty in the name of this enlightened age. But it still stands in the Word of God as the most humanitarian procedure for the good of all men.

## **Capital Punishment For Those Who Offer Their Children To Molech (20:1-5)**

[And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying \[Lev. 20:1\].](#)

God is speaking to Moses now, not to Aaron or the people. He is speaking to the lawgiver because this is about the penal code. Paul says that those in positions of authority who rule over us do not carry the sword in vain. They are to use it ([Rom. 13](#)). A judge has no right to let a sadistic criminal, a psychotic criminal, loose on society to endanger your family and mine.

Someone will say that the electric chair is a mean old chair. That's right, it is. In that day, they were executed by stoning. That's not pretty either. No one has claimed it was pretty. It is an awful thing, a horrible thing. Don't forget, the crime committed is also horrible.

[Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones \[Lev. 20:2\].](#)

The worship of Molech was savage, satanic, cruel, and brutal. Children were offered as sacrifices to the idol of Molech which was heated red hot. According to historians, the arms of the idol were outstretched and the child was cast "into a gaping hole, full of fire." This was fiendish and demoniacal. What a contrast is Jesus who stretched out His arms to receive little children! "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" ([Matt. 19:14](#)). Stoning to death was the penalty for this crime of "giving his seed to Molech," and it is difficult to see how any would oppose the sentence. Stoning is almost too good for them.

Friends, the child brutality today in our land could be curtailed if our judges would punish parents who brutally treat the little ones who can't protect themselves. The judge should protect them.

[And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people: because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name \[Lev. 20:3\].](#)

This is the strongest language possible. "I will set my face against that man." Was this an unpardonable sin? I don't know, but every word is a terrible invective. "I will cut him off

from among his people." This sin was a sin against God. It defiles His sanctuary and profanes His holy name. In [Ezekiel 23:37-39](#), we find that the children of Israel did just this, and it was one of the reasons that God's judgment came upon them. Remember that idolatry was high treason in a nation that was a theocracy.

And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not:

Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a-whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people [[Lev. 20:4-5](#)].

For a man to remain silent when a neighbor worshiped Molech by offering his child was to make him a partner in crime. To be soft-hearted and soft-headed in executing the penalty made a man guilty. He was to be cut off from the people, which was tantamount to the death penalty.

### **Capital Punishment For Those Who Practice Spiritism (20:6-8)**

And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a-whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people [[Lev. 20:6](#)].

This was another practice of the Canaanites who were then in the land. This was false religion which was definitely satanic. Someone may object that it was not the real thing and lacked the supernatural. Frankly, there is supernaturalism manifested in Satan worship. The fact of the matter is that the Lord Jesus Himself warned that there would appear finally an antichrist who would be able to perform miracles, and that, if it were possible, he would deceive the very elect. Satan is a liar and the father of the lie. God says that He will set His face against the soul that turns to this kind of false worship.

A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them [[Lev. 20:27](#)].

I bring this verse up into this section as it too deals with satanic superstition. Demon possession is a reality and has existed in all ages. In this modern age, many cults and "isms" are promoted by those who are demon possessed. This is all the work of Satan. The death penalty was exacted for participating in or practicing these satanic rites of the occult.

Some people are surprised that worshipers of Satan have power. Sure, the devil has power! A departure from the Word of God and a departure from God always leads into error, and this gives rise to the false cults which we find today.

Why did God exact the death penalty for participating in these satanic rites of the occult?

Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.

And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you [[Lev. 20:7-8](#)].

These verses offer a good and sufficient reason for the death penalty. The people were to be holy because they belonged to God, and He was holy. Any deviation from this standard was a serious breach of conduct. To practice the abominations that have been named was to turn from God to Satan. It was spiritual adultery and treason. Today people do not seem to realize how serious that can be. This is God's universe. God is a reality, friends. God's statutes are never to be taken lightly.

### **Capital Punishment For Those Who Curse Father Or Mother (20:9)**

For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother: his blood shall be upon him [[Lev. 20:9](#)].

The fifth commandment was not to be considered of minor importance. In [Leviticus 19:3](#) the Israelite was instructed to fear his father and mother. Now the death penalty was inflicted for cursing father and mother. In [Romans 1:31](#) Paul spoke of those "without natural affection." And we are told that in the last days children will be disobedient to parents, and men will be without natural affection ([2Tim. 3:2-3](#)). This characterized the heathen of the past and will characterize the last days. The punishment stated here is extreme.

We need to mention here that the Bible also offers grace in this regard. The Lord Jesus told the parable of the prodigal son who came home and was received by the father. That is grace. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1John 1:9](#)).

### **Capital Punishment For Those Who Commit Adultery (20:10-16)**

And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

And if a man lie with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.

And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them [[Lev. 20:10-16](#)].

This entire section contains unspeakable and even unbelievable sins. Adultery in every form and shape was punished with death. Sins of sex have caused the most powerful empires to topple. I would say that sex and liquor were the two causes of the fall of Babylon, Egypt, Rome, and France. What a warning this is for our nation!

This is a rebuke against lax morals today. These sins brought down fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah. These are the sins which cause God to give up a people ([Rom. 1:24-28](#)).

In spite of the awful immorality of these sins and the severity of the punishment, the Savior stands ready to forgive any who will come to Him. He put His sacrificial death between this sin and the woman taken in adultery. His sacrificial death atones for you, my friend, if you will come to him for forgiveness.

### **Certain Offenses Which Require A Lesser Penalty (20:17-21)**

And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness; it is a wicked thing: and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity.

And if a man shall lie with a woman having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness; he hath discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.

And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity.

And if a man shall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness: they shall bear their sin: they shall die childless.

And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless [[Lev. 20:17-21](#)].

Incest with a full or half sister was forbidden and the penalty was to be executed publicly. God demanded cleanliness in every detail of his people's lives; especially as it had to do with sexual relations. God forbade sexual relations between those who were near of kin. He did not say that they would not bear children, but that they should die childless -- the children would die before the parents who were guilty of this crime.

### **Conclusion To The Law Of Holiness (20:22-26)**

Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out [[Lev. 20:22](#)].

God put the Canaanites out of the land because they committed these awful sins. He warns Israel that He will put them out of the land if they do the same things. God is no respecter of persons. Do you know that their failure to obey God brought on them the Babylonian captivity? Listen to the record: "Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. . . . And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. . . . And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. . . . Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel" ([2Kings 21:1-2, 6, 9](#)).

And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them [[Lev. 20:23](#)].

This should answer the question as to the justice of God in destroying some of the nations which occupied Palestine. As a result of these sins they were eaten up with social diseases. God forbade His people to take or touch anything in the city of Jericho at the time of the conquest. Evidently venereal diseases had reached epidemic proportions.

But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people [[Lev. 20:24](#)].

It was a land flowing with milk and honey. Timber covered that land. What happened to it? "Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them: And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book: And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day" ([Deut. 29:24-28](#)).

They are planting trees over there today. When I was there, I set out five trees; one for each member of my family, one for the church that I served, and one for a Jewish friend.

Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean [[Lev. 20:25](#)].

God reviews the statutes which were to make His people a different and a holy people. He began with their diet, and He concludes with it.

And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine [[Lev. 20:26](#)].

They are out of the land because they did not obey God. They were to be a holy nation like unto their God who is holy. "But," you may say, "they are in the land." May I ask how they are getting along? They have had trouble every minute they have been back in the land. Do you know what the problem is? They went back to the land but they did not return to God. When they do return to God -- which they will do someday -- then there will be blessing in that land. God hasn't changed His mind, friends.

This should be a lesson to us and to our nation. God is high and holy, and He demands holiness. This is the key to Leviticus.

## Chapter 21

**THEME:** Defilement of priesthood prevented in human kinship and friendship; disqualifications for priestly function

We have been studying the law as directed to the people from chapter 11 through chapter 20. Now we come to the law for the personal purity of the priests. This is found in chapters 21 and 22. We will find a certain amount of repetition here.

It had been God's original intention that the entire nation should be a kingdom of priests ([Exod. 19:5-6](#)). Their disobedience in the matter of the golden calf destroyed the possibility of the realization of a perfect and ideal society. In the Millennium, the perfect society will be attained. Then the entire nation of Israel will be the priests here on the earth for the earthly people, the gentile nations. Through the Millennium and through eternity, there are the three groups of the human family: (1) the church of Jesus Christ in the New Jerusalem, (2) the nation Israel here on this earth, (3) the saved Gentiles on this earth.

After Israel's failure, God chose only one tribe to be the priests, the tribe of Levi. In Israel, therefore, there were the congregation, the priesthood, and the high priest. The higher position required a higher obligation. The greater responsibility demanded a higher way of life.

The church today is called a royal priesthood. Every believer is a priest and has access to the throne of grace today. Every believer-priest is required to live a holy life which is possible only by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" ([1Pet. 4:8-11](#)). He also said, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" ([1Pet. 2:9-10](#)).

As God's people we are called to a higher way of life. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind. .

.. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" ([Eph. 4:17, 22-24](#)). The child of God is saved by grace and has been called to a high place in his life.

A believer should be careful about accepting an office in the church. If he does become an officer, he should measure up to that responsibility. I have very little patience with men who accept an office in the church and then say they are not able to come to the mid-week service or come on Sunday night. Well, my brother, you should not have accepted the office. Responsibility, you see, comes through privilege. It is a privilege to serve the Lord in an office. You have been elevated. Then live up to it.

Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest and He measured up to His office. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, called the bride of Christ, is to be cleansed before she is presented to Him without spot or wrinkle ([Eph. 5:26-27](#)).

The church leader is to be an example to others in this particular matter. May I say right here that I get many letters from both men and women who were divorced before they were saved. Some of the men want to enter the ministry and the women wish to become missionaries. I know one cannot generalize about these things, but I do want to say that I think it is almost sinful the way certain innocent people who had an unfortunate experience in their lives -- many of them before they were saved -- are shut out from an office because of that past experience in which they were not guilty at all. I encourage these people to go ahead and prepare for the ministry or the mission field. But I warn them also to be prepared to weather the criticism of some "saint" who thinks he is speaking for God. Also, they will find certain churches that will shut them out. Yet I encourage them to go ahead with their preparation because there will be a place for them. And there is. We need to recognize that in this day there are a great many people who are the innocent victims of divorce.

Another thing we need to recognize is that the wife of a pastor is not an assistant pastor. She is simply the wife of the pastor; that is the role she is to fill. She must be the kind of person who would be a credit to the office that the man occupies. It is not required of her that she must play the piano and the organ, sing in the choir, lead the missionary society, and on and on.

And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be burnt with fire  
[Lev. 21:9].

Why? Because of the position of her father. She was to receive the severest of penalties if she disgraced the office of her father.

And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes;

Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother;

Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God: for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD [[Lev. 21:10-12](#)].

This is the first mention of the high priest. As God's anointed priest, he is to be separated unto the Lord. He was to wear the crown on which were inscribed the words "Holiness unto the Lord" as a continual reminder of who he is, whose he is, and whom he serves.

He is not to rend his holy garments. He was not to be a violent man. At the trial of Jesus this law was broken when the high priest emotionally tore his clothes ([Matt. 26:65](#)). Neither was the high priest to attend the funeral of either his father or mother. The anointing oil had been poured upon him, and he must be totally dedicated to God and separated from sin because of his position.

The Lord Jesus Christ had the anointing oil poured upon Him and He came to do the Father's will even unto death. He demands just such a dedication on the part of His followers.

And he shall take a wife in her virginity.

A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.

Neither shall he profane his seed among his people: for I the LORD do sanctify him [[Lev. 21:13-15](#)].

His wife too must measure up to the position of the holy office. He is forbidden to marry a harlot, a profane or a divorced woman.

### **Disqualifications For Priestly Function (21:16-23)**

The following verses list disqualifications for the priestly function. It includes blindness, lameness, flat nose, dwarfism, scabs, and other deformities and blemishes.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying.

Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God.

For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous.

Or, a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded,

Or crookbacked, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken;

No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire: he hath

a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God  
[[Lev. 21:16-21](#)].

Why should this be? Just as no sacrifice was to be offered that had a blemish, by the same token no priest was to serve in the tabernacle if he had a blemish. Both the offering and the offerer represent Christ and there is no blemish in Him, either in His person or in His work. Christ is the perfect High Priest. There is no blemish in Him but rather beauty and glory and excellency.

He shall eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy.

Only he shall not go unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not my sanctuaries: for I the LORD do sanctify them [[Lev. 21:22-23](#)].

Although those with a blemish were forbidden to serve, they were not shut out from the table of the Lord. God provided for them. This is in contrast to the treatment the pagan world gave the unfit.

There is a spiritual lesson for us here. There are many believers who have some serious handicap either physically, morally, ethically, or spiritually. This would bar them from certain forms of service, yet they are genuine saints of God who have all the rights and privileges of believers in every respect.

When I was studying for the ministry, I taught a young fellow in Sunday school who was in junior high school at the time. He was a marvelous athlete, but he had a cleft palate with a speech impediment. He came to me one day and told me that he would like to be a minister. Now, how do you talk to a young fellow like that? I tried to explain to him that he was a wonderful athlete, but that his speech was a handicap and suggested he find something in Christian work which would not require public speaking. I've followed this man through the years. He became a football coach at a college. His influence for Christ was as great or greater than any minister's. They learned to admire this man as an athlete and then, with his speech impediment, he would tell them about Jesus Christ and it made a real impact upon them.

## Chapter 22

**THEME:** Defilement of the priesthood through disease, diet, and the dead; discernment of the offerings brought by the people

### **Defilement Of The Priesthood Through Disease, Diet, And The Dead (22:1-16)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they profane not my holy name in those things which they hallow unto me: I am the LORD [[Lev. 22:1-2](#)].

There was to be a separation of the sacred and the secular. Aaron was not to bring the things of the tabernacle home with him. The lesson for us is that we are not to treat the sacred and holy things of God as if they were commonplace.

Say unto them, Whosoever he be of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD [[Lev. 22:3](#)].

The priest is not to go about his office in a careless and slipshod manner. God requires that he should be put out of the office of the priesthood if he does that. I believe there is a spiritual application for the believer today. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" ([1Cor. 11:31-32](#)).

God proceeds to enumerate all manner of uncleanness which would disqualify the priest from carrying out his priestly duties.

What man soever of the seed of Aaron is a leper, or hath a running issue; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing that is unclean by the dead, or a man whose seed goeth from him;

Or whosoever toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, or a man of whom he may take uncleanness, whatsoever uncleanness he hath;

The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water.

And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food.

That which dieth of itself, or is torn with beasts, he shall not eat to defile himself therewith: I am the LORD.

They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do sanctify them [[Lev. 22:4-9](#)].

The priests were to be holy in their relationships in their homes, in their social contacts, in their business contacts, in anything where they touched the world. The priests were set apart to be holy unto the Lord. They were to be an example to others. Some of the things mentioned are the same as those given for all of Israel. The priest had no special privileges. Uncleanness in the common man and uncleanness in the priest were to be ceremonially cleansed. The private life of the priest must match his public office and service.

There shall no stranger eat of the holy thing: a sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant, shall not eat of the holy thing [[Lev. 22:10](#)].

The priest must preserve the sanctity of the tabernacle by excluding the stranger. Only the sons of God can worship God.

But if the priest buy any soul with his money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house: they shall eat of his meat.

If the priest's daughter also be married unto a stranger, she may not eat of an offering of the holy things.

But if the priest's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child, and is returned unto her father's house, as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat: but there shall no stranger eat thereof [[Lev. 22:11-13](#)].

The verses go on to explain that only those who belong to the priest, who were born in his house, can eat of his meat. If a priest's daughter married a Gentile, she was excluded from access to the holy things. If she were widowed or divorced and returned to her father's house, she could eat her father's meat. The prodigal son or daughter may return home and find a welcome.

And if a man eat of the holy thing unwittingly, then he shall put the fifth part thereof unto it, and shall give it unto the priest with the holy thing.

And they shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel, which they offer unto the LORD;

Or suffer them to bear the iniquity of trespass, when they eat their holy things: for I the LORD do sanctify them [[Lev. 22:14-16](#)].

Ignorance of the law affords no excuse. The man who eats of the holy things unwittingly is guilty. A fine is expected of him. This placed an added responsibility upon the priests to guard the holy place.

The unbelieving world gains its impression of the church from the members of the church. Indifference and irreverence is detected immediately by the outside unbeliever, and his attitude and conduct is governed accordingly. The Lord Jesus said, "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh" ([Matt. 18:7](#)).

### **Discernment Of The Offerings Brought By The People (22:17-33)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering:

Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.

But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you [[Lev. 22:17-20](#)].

This section contains rules and regulations for the people in bringing their offerings, and these rules must be strictly enforced by the priests. The regulations apply to the people, but the enforcement applies to the priests. No offering with a blemish was to be permitted because the offerings pointed to Christ. Any departure from this was to lower the concept of the person of Christ and the holy demands of God.

And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.

Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.

Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land.

Neither from a stranger's hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption is in them, and blemishes be in them: they shall not be accepted for you.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

And whether it be cow or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day [[Lev. 22:21-28](#)].

Natural deformity in an animal as well as bruises and cuts and broken bones comprised the blemishes. Any of these should make them reject the animal as an offering. No stranger was to make an offering. And any offering animal was to be at least seven days old. Seven represents completion -- it was to have lived a complete cycle.

It was at this point of offering animals without blemish that Israel failed miserably. They brought that which was torn and lame and sick for their offerings and God called forth from the prophets a denunciation of their offerings. We find this in [Malachi 1:6-14](#).

And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the LORD, offer it at your own will.

On the same day it shall be eaten up; ye shall leave none of it until the morrow: I am the LORD [[Lev. 22:29-30](#)].

The offering was to be a freewill offering. This type of offering must represent the Father who gave His Son in love and the Son who came ". . . for the joy that was set before him .

. ." ([Heb. 12:2](#)). The offering must be eaten the same day. No opportunity must be allowed for the slightest bit of corruption.

Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I am the LORD.

Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I am the LORD which hallow you,

That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD [[Lev. 22:31-33](#)].

They were to be a witness for God. They were not to go as witnesses to the ends of the earth as you and I have been called to do today. They were called to serve God as a nation. As they did this, the whole world would come to Jerusalem. God's holy name was to be represented in every act of worship.

What was to be the motivation for their obedience? Dr. Andrew A. Bonar gives five reasons:

- (1) "I am the Lord"
- (2) "I will be hallowed among the children of Israel"
- (3) "I am the Lord which hallow you"
- (4) "I am the Lord which brought you out of Egypt"
- (5) "Your God."

"I am the Lord which hallow you." There is liberty for the believer today, but liberty does not grant license. The holiness and righteousness of God must be zealously maintained in all our worship.

"I am the Lord which brought you out of Egypt." God has saved you, my friend. God saves you by grace. He didn't save you with the idea of exacting commensurate work from you. Then it wouldn't be grace. I do not agree with the words of the song, "I gave My life for thee, what hast thou done for Me?" Grace does not demand payment. But let me ask you a question. Do you love Him? Do you want to serve Him? The wife doesn't fix a birthday dinner for her husband because it is her duty. She does it because she loves the old boy! And the true believer will serve God because he loves Him.

"I am the LORD which hallow you, that brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God." Is He your God, my friend? If He is, then you represent Him. The world is reading you. Remember the little poem:

The Gospel is written a chapter a day

By the deeds that you do and words that you say.

Men read what you say whether faithless or true.

Say, what is the Gospel according to you?

Men are not reading the Bible today. They are reading you and me. What are they reading in you, my friend?

## Chapter 23

**THEME:** The holy seasons of the Sabbath; the holy season of Passover; the holy season of Unleavened Bread; the holy season of Firstfruits; the holy season of Pentecost; the holy season of Trumpets; the holy season of the great Day of Atonement; the holy season of Tabernacles

This is a remarkable chapter of God's solemn festivals. The holy holidays were times of joy. There was mourning on only one of them, the great Day of Atonement. The others were to be times of joy and rejoicing. God never wanted a weeping people to come before Him; He wanted a rejoicing people. These festivals provide God's calendar for all time.

John Peter Lange gives the meaning of the so-called feasts as "a fixed, appointed time." It is sometimes translated a "set time." Perhaps "holy seasons" would be the most appropriate translation.

Details for most of these feasts are given elsewhere in Scripture. Here they are given in an orderly and purposeful arrangement. There are seven feasts, excluding the Sabbath Day, which is given first. The Sabbath Day was not a feast day, but is included because it furnishes the yardstick for the measuring of time. The number seven is as prominent in this chapter as in the Book of Revelation. It is the dimension of time.

The Sabbath Day is the seventh day. Pentecost is the feast of the seventh week; the seventh new moon with its following Day of Atonement and Feast of Tabernacles is the feast of the seventh month. In the twenty-fifth chapter we will have occasion to consider the sabbatic year and the year of Jubilee, all adjusted to the number seven. There were seven days of unleavened bread, and seven days of dwelling in tabernacles in the Feast of Tabernacles.

These days of holy convocation served a twofold purpose: a practical purpose and a prophetic purpose. On the practical plane they served both a social and commercial purpose. They brought the twelve tribes together in worship and fellowship. All males were required to go to Jerusalem to worship on three occasions: at the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles ([Deut. 16:16](#)). You can see that this would have a tendency to unite the nation and knit the tribes together. The people would come from all sections of the kingdom and exchange ideas as well as merchandise. Failure to follow these instructions was one of the contributing factors in dividing the nation into northern and southern kingdoms.

Most of these feasts were geared into the agricultural life of the land, especially the harvesting of the crops. This was especially true of the feasts of Firstfruits, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. This brought the worship of Jehovah down to the grain field, the vineyard, and the fig orchard. Praise to God was united with the work of the people. The sweat of their brow became a sacred thing.

The primary purpose of these feast days was to give a prophetic picture of all future time. Each one of these feasts has found or will find a fulfillment in time. Most of them have been fulfilled. We will point this out as we go along.

We are no longer to observe days and seasons because Christ has fulfilled them. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" ([Col. 2:16-17](#)).

I should mention that all the festivals and observances are not included in this chapter. The Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee are found in chapter 25, and the New Moons in [Numbers 28:11-15](#).

### **The Holy Seasons Of The Sabbath (23:1-3)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts.

Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings [[Lev. 23:1-3](#)].

If you will notice, as we go through this book, God always directs His instructions to certain people, and it is well to note the ones to whom He is directing the instructions. He tells Moses as the lawgiver, and he in turn is to tell the people. Even though the feasts will involve the tabernacle, the priests are not specifically mentioned. The people were to come together, and the feasts were to fit into the yearly calendar of Israel.

Passover -- the crucifixion and death of Christ  
Unleavened Bread -- the fellowship we have with Christ because of His death  
Firstfruits -- the resurrection of Christ  
Pentecost -- the beginning of the church  
Trumpets -- Israel brought back into the land (future)  
Great Day of Atonement -- the work of Christ upon the Cross for us  
Tabernacles -- the time when Israel is in the land (future)

The weekly Sabbath cannot properly be labeled one of the feast days. It is pre-Mosaic and goes back to the original creation. It was repeated to Israel, and in Deuteronomy an additional reason for its observance is given. "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" ([Deut. 5:15](#)).

When they were slaves down in Egypt, they had to work every day. The Sabbath Day is tied in with their deliverance. Now that they have been delivered from Egypt, they are to set aside one day to worship God. There is to be cessation from all labor and activity.

When the early church set aside a day of the week to come together, they chose Sunday, the first day of the week, because it was the day our Lord came back from the dead. That

is the day full deliverance was given to us. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" ([Rom. 4:25](#)). The Sabbath Day belongs to the old creation. We belong to the new creation. ". . . if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [creation] . . ." ([2Cor. 5:17](#)). We honor Christ by setting aside the first day of the week.

The Sabbath was a yardstick of time for Israel. It spoke of cessation from all labor and activity and looked forward to a new week when there would be a new creation. It was also prophetic in that it looked forward to redemption. Man lost his rest in the first creation, but now rest is his through redemption. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" ([Heb. 4:9-11](#)). Our rest comes through redemption and redemption only. There is a rest for the people of God. What is it? Our sins are forgiven. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" ([Matt. 11:28](#)). Rest and redemption are the twofold aspect of the Sabbath Day.

The Sabbath Day was not a feast day. It is geared to the week and not to the year. It was not a feast, but a set time.

### **The Holy Season Of Passover (23:4-5)**

These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover [[Lev. 23:4-5](#)].

The description of the feast was given to us back in [Exodus 12](#), but here it is placed in the calendar of God. This verse makes it clear that the feasts begin properly with the Passover and not the Sabbath. In [Exodus 12:2](#) God said, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." This holy season represents the sacrificial death of Christ and the value of His blood. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" ([1Cor. 5:7](#)).

The Passover originated in the historical event of the last plague in Egypt by the slaying of the firstborn. Israel was instructed to slay a lamb and put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of their homes. They were to stay inside, roast the lamb, and eat it. The angel of death would pass over every door which was marked with the blood. When we get to [Numbers 9](#), we will find that Israel kept the Passover when they were encamped at Mount Sinai.

The Passover was brought to its fulfillment the night of the arrest of the Lord Jesus Christ after He had observed the Passover with His disciples, and had instituted a new feast on the dying embers of the old. Then we see the Lamb slain in [Revelation 5:6](#). I think the Passover will be observed again in the Kingdom. "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God" ([Luke 22:16](#)).

### **The Holy Season Of Unleavened Bread (23:6-8)**

And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein [[Lev. 23:6-8](#)].

Although this is considered a separate feast, it is closely aligned with the Passover. Passover was observed one day, and the next day -- the first day of the week -- began the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Its historical origin is in direct connection with the Passover ([Exod. 12:14-28](#)). Unleavened bread was to be eaten for seven days beginning on the day after Passover. In Matthew and Mark the Passover and Unleavened Bread are considered as one feast.

Leaven here, as elsewhere, is the symbol of evil. The unleavened bread speaks of fellowship with Christ based on His redemption and maintained by the holy walk of the believer ([1Cor. 5:7-8](#)).

No servile work was to be done. On those days the participants were to rest from their daily occupations. There were to be offerings made by fire which refer to burnt offerings, meal offerings, and sin offerings. The first and the seventh days of the week of Unleavened Bread were the particular days of an "holy convocation."

The Passover speaks of the death of Christ for our sins. After that, we are now to maintain fellowship with Him on the basis of the fact that He died for us. We are to remain clean by confessing our sins as we go along. Our Lord said to His men, ". . . If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" ([John 13:8](#)). It signifies that the value of the blood of Christ continues for the believer after he is saved. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1John 1:7](#)). The blood of Jesus Christ keeps on keeping us clean. That is the meaning of the feast of Mazzoth, Unleavened Bread.

### **The Holy Season Of Firstfruits (23:9-14)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:

And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it [[Lev. 23:9-11](#)].

This feast could not be observed until Israel got out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land. When they had sowed their grain in the land, they were to watch for the first heading of the barley. When they would see a stalk here and there, they would cut

each one down and put them together to make a sheaf. This was then brought to the tabernacle, and the priest would offer it to the Lord.

The exact day that he did this is not stated. It may have been the first day of Unleavened Bread or the last day of that feast. The important item to note is that it was done on the first day of the week. This is so important because Christ is called the firstfruits. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" ([1Cor. 15:20](#)). "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" ([1Cor. 15:23](#)). The time of His resurrection is clearly stated in [Matthew 28:1](#): "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre." On the first day of the week, Christ, "the firstfruits" was resurrected from the dead.

Someday the church will be included in resurrection, but so far He is the only One who has been raised in a glorified body. At the rapture of the church, we shall all rise. There will be a coming out of the graves just as Christ did. He is the firstfruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" ([John 12:24](#), italics mine).

You see, the offering of the firstfruits indicated that there would be a harvest to follow. Believers are that harvest.

And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD.

And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.

And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings [[Lev. 23:12-14](#)].

Offerings accompanied the celebration of this day. No sin offering was included because that was included in the death of Christ -- that is where He settled the sin question. These offerings are a sweet savor. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" ([2Cor. 5:21](#)). ". . . because I live, ye shall live also" ([John 14:19](#)). This is a glorious truth that we have here.

The new crop of grain could not be enjoyed until this offering was waved before Jehovah. For the believer, the death and resurrection of Christ brings us into new relationships and blessings. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" ([2Cor. 5:17](#)). That doesn't mean that just a few habits change. It means we are taken out of the old Adam, and we are joined to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we have a new purpose, a new goal, a new joy, and new life -- and that would affect a few old habits, would it not? He makes all things new.

## **The Holy Season Of Pentecost (23:15-22)**

Notice the orderly, chronological sequence that we have here. Passover tells us that Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us. Unleavened Bread is sharing the things of Christ, fellowship with Him. Then Firstfruits signifies Christ's resurrection, the firstfruits from the dead. Now we come to Pentecost.

**And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:**

**Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD [Lev. 23:15-16].**

There are several things we need to note about Pentecost because there is so much being made of it today that is absolutely unscriptural. The Feast of Pentecost always fell on the first day of the week. They counted seven Sabbaths, which would be seven weeks or forty-nine days, then the fiftieth day, the day after the seventh Sabbath, the first day of the week, was Pentecost. This was fifty days after the offering of the wave sheaf of firstfruits.

The church was born on the first day of the week. It was on the first day of the week that our Lord arose. Doesn't that tell us something? Wouldn't it be rather odd for the church to go back and observe the old Sabbath which belonged to the old creation when the church is a new creation? When the church meets on the first day of the week, we are celebrating our Lord's resurrection and the birthday of the church. This festival is also called the Feast of Weeks.

The typical meaning of Pentecost is not left to man's speculation. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" ([Acts 2:1, 4](#)). "When the day of Pentecost was fully come" doesn't mean at twelve noon or at six in the evening. "The day of Pentecost was fully come" means the fulfillment of that for which it was given in Leviticus. It denotes the coming of the Holy Spirit to baptize believers into the body of Christ and to begin the calling out of the church. Pentecost is the birthday of the church.

It was fifty days after the resurrection of Christ that the Holy Spirit came. God was running according to His calendar and on time.

They were to offer a new meal offering. That is a type of the church. The church is something new. Christ didn't say that He would give us an old garment and patch it up. He came to bring a brand new robe of righteousness. To be in Christ is to be clothed with His righteousness. That is how God sees us.

We need to note the time sequence. After the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, He showed Himself alive for forty days. Then, just before He ascended into heaven, He said to His own that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father. He told them they should be endued with power from on high ([Luke 24:49](#)). In [Acts 1:5](#) it

states: ". . . but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Ten days later, on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit of God came upon them.

**Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baken with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD [Lev. 23:17].**

Do you notice anything startling about this verse? We have said that leaven is the principle of evil and that it was not to be in the offerings. Here is the exception. This is typifying the church, and it is a new offering in that it is a meal offering with leaven included. What does it mean? It means there is evil in the church. This is obvious to the most casual observer.

I was a pastor for forty years. I have served in four different states from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I have been in some wonderful churches, and I look back on those years with a real joy. I've had wonderful fellowship with the members of these churches. They have loved me and I have loved them; we have been very close. However I happen to be able to testify that there is evil in the church. That is why leaven is included in this offering. This speaks of the visible church down on earth, the church as you and I see it and know it. There is evil in it. The Lord knew that long before the church even existed!

**And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD.**

**Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings.**

**And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest [Lev. 23:18-20].**

All the offerings are to be made at this time. All that Christ is and all that He has done have been made over to the church. Believers can draw upon Him for everything. You can come to Him for salvation, first of all. You can come to Him for help and for mercy, for sympathy and for comfort. You can come to Him in all the situations of life. All the offerings were made at this time.

Isn't it interesting how the Lord, in these pictures, is giving to you and me some of the greatest truths? He uses pictures rather than cold, theological terms.

**And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations [Lev. 23:21].**

They were to rest on that day and cease from their own works. That is what you and I are to do when we come to Christ. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:5](#)).

And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shall thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God [Lev. 23:22].

The holy day was adapted to the land. In the midst of the celebration they were to remember the poor and the stranger.

That is the practical side of the work of the church and of all believers today. We have been saved by grace, but we should attempt to get the Word of God out to folk and be helpful to them. I do not believe the church has any right to engage in any social service in which they do not present the gospel. We are to feed people and reach out to them in their need, but along with this we must present the gospel to them. We should remember that a man with an empty stomach is not going to be very eager to listen to the gospel. James has some things to say about that ([James 2:14-20](#)).

This also looks forward to the great harvest at the end of the age, after the rapture of the church, when God will remember the Gentiles. [James 1:18](#) says, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." The early church was Jewish and was firstfruits, but it was to be followed by a great company of Gentiles. Our Lord tells about the end of the age: "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels" ([Matt. 13:38-39](#)). This is the judgment at the end of the age. Angels are not connected in any way to the Rapture. This is the judgment that is coming that is in mind here. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles" ([Isa. 42:1](#)).

### **The Holy Season Of Trumpets (23:23-25)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

Ye shall do no servile work therein; but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD [[Lev. 23:23-25](#)].

The date here is important. Three feasts take place in the seventh month. It is sort of a sabbatic month, just as there is a sabbatic day and a sabbatic year. This marked the beginning of the civil year as Passover marked the beginning of the religious year.

The blowing of two silver trumpets was used in moving Israel through the wilderness ([Num. 10](#)). The trumpets were blown seven times to get them on the march. There are seven trumpets in the Revelation which cover the Great Tribulation period and which will see Israel restored to the land for the Kingdom Age. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem" ([Isa. 27:13](#)). "And he shall send his angels with a

great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" ([Matt. 24:31](#)).

Before the restoration of Israel the church will have left the earth already. They will hear the voice of the Lord like a trumpet. These are now the people left on earth who will hear the sound of the trumpet.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance" ([Ps. 89:15](#)).

The trumpets are connected with the coming judgment.

### **The Holy Season Of The Great Day Of Atonement (23:26-32)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.

For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.

And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.

Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath [[Lev. 23:26-32](#)].

The great Day of Atonement was fully covered in chapter 16. Three times Scripture says, "Ye shall afflict your souls." It was a solemn day rather than a feast day, which was different from all the others.

In contrast to this, it is interesting to note that the trumpet of Jubilee was sounded every fifty years on the Day of Atonement, and that it denoted joy and rejoicing ([Lev. 25:8-9](#)). There is deliverance when the price is paid for your salvation and mine. That is the year of Jubilee. What a glorious year that must have been!

### **The Holy Season Of Tabernacles (23:33-44)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.

On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein [[Lev. 23:33-36](#)].

This is the third feast in the seventh month. It was both a memorial and a prophetic holy season. It followed the great Day of Atonement by only a few days. As a memorial, it spoke of their days of wandering in the wilderness when they dwelt in booths. It points prophetically to the time when God will have fully removed their sin, and they will dwell again safely in the Promised Land. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" ([Zech. 12:10](#)). "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" ([Zech. 13:1](#)). "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it" ([Mic. 4:4](#)).

These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day:

Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD [[Lev. 23:37-38](#)].

This is a special emphasis on the feast days to revel in what God delights for the benefit of His people.

Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.

And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.

And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

Ye shall dwell in booths seven days: all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:

That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD [[Lev. 23:39-44](#)].

After the great Day of Atonement when there was made a full expiation of their sins, and the harvest and fruit of the land were gathered in, there was observed this very joyful occasion. They were to dwell in booths to remind them of the wilderness wanderings, but also to point them to the future. [Hebrews 11](#) tells us that they all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off. They were persuaded of them and they embraced them. They were looking forward to that day when they would not dwell in booths as in the wilderness, but they would be in the millennial age. That is the hope for this earth.

This holy season will be observed during the Millennium: "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles" ([Zech. 14:16-18](#)). You will find it interesting to read that whole chapter of [Zechariah 14](#).

This feast is not only prophetic of the Millennium, but also points to eternity and the everlasting Kingdom. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" ([Rev. 21:3](#)). This is the fulfillment of the great Feast of Tabernacles. For seven days in the seventh month they were to rejoice. This speaks of the final and full rejoicing of God's earthly people. (His heavenly people will be with Him in the New Jerusalem.) Friends, there is a great future ahead for us!

## Chapter 24

**THEME:** Olive oil for the golden lampstand; fine flour for the table of showbread; death penalty for the sin of blasphemy

This chapter seems to be out of place with what has gone before. The items in this chapter seem to be disconnected. The oil for the lampstand and the bread for the table do not seem to belong between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Sabbatic year. Nevertheless, this is the method the Holy Spirit uses on another occasion. In [Numbers 8:1-4](#) there are the instructions for lighting the lights, and a brief description is inserted between the gifts of the princes and the cleansing of the Levites. I think it teaches that all is to be done in the light and leading of the Holy Spirit. The same lesson is to be drawn here. The celebration of the feasts and the observances of the Sabbatic and Jubilee years must be performed in the light of the Holy Spirit and in the strength and power of Christ. That is very important.

There are some practical implications which must not be overlooked. The people were to furnish the oil for the lampstand and the fine flour for the bread on the table. God made them participants in the provision and worship of the tabernacle. God, by some miracle,

could have furnished the oil and the flour and the workmanship for the table and the lampstand. However, He wanted the people to participate.

That is the way I feel about getting out the Word of God. In every local congregation there are ways for you to get involved in the work of the Lord. Just keep your eyes open and you will notice something to do. I remember when I was teaching a little Bible study to a Boy Scout troop. I doubt whether any one of those boys ever did a good deed -- they almost put me in the hospital! I really had to be stern with them. A couple of men from the church came in one night and saw what a problem I had with those boys. So they volunteered their help. It was wonderful to have them sit with the boys while I taught the Bible study.

All those who love the Word of God should get involved in getting the message to people. God says, "You bring the oil; you bring the flour."

The importance of the lampstand cannot be overlooked. It was probably the most accurate and beautiful picture of Christ in all the tabernacle. It was solid gold and beautifully wrought into seven branches of almond boughs from one main stem.

Aaron had sole charge of the lights of the lampstand to keep them burning ([Exod. 30:7-8](#)). It is important to see that today the lamps are in the hands of our Great High Priest. Jesus Christ has said that He is the Light of the world. Before He left, He told His own that they were to be the light of the world. Paul uses this same idea when he says, "... among whom ye shine as lights in the world" ([Phil. 2:15](#)). In [Revelation 1](#) and 2, the Lord Jesus Christ as our Great High Priest walks in the midst of the lampstands today to keep us shining. He pours in the oil which is the filling with the Holy Spirit. He trims the wicks so that the light will burn brighter. He removes the light when it refuses to burn -- this is the sin unto death which John mentions in his epistle.

Therefore the insertion of the lampstand and the showbread in this section is not out of place.

The second incident in the Book of Leviticus is found in this chapter: the son of an Israelitish mother and an Egyptian father blasphemed. This is another example of the problem and difficulty presented by the mixed multitude that came out of Egypt with Israel. They were problem children and troublemakers. They correspond to those in the church today who are torn between the world on one hand and serving God on the other.

### **Olive Oil For The Golden Lampstand (24:1-4)**

*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,*

*Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually*  
*[Lev. 24:1-2].*

The people of Israel were to furnish the olive oil, and since the seven lamps burned continually, both day and night, this was no small item. This gave each Israelite, as well as the tribe of Levi, an interest in the service of the tabernacle. The olive oil was to be pure, free from leaves and all impurities. It was not to be pressed out, but beaten out, to

produce the very finest grade. The best was to be used, for the oil speaks of the Holy Spirit.

Without the vail of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: it shall be a statute for ever in your generations.

He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually [[Lev. 24:3-4](#)].

The lamps were to be kept lit continually while the tabernacle was set up. (Obviously, when they marched in the wilderness, they did not hold up lighted candlesticks.) And we note that Aaron alone controlled the use and the service of the lampstand. "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations" ([Exod. 30:7-8](#)).

The Lord Jesus Christ is walking in the midst of the lampstands today. He is our Great High Priest. He trims them every now and then as He moves into our hearts and lives. Sometimes He must snuff out a light that is giving off smoke instead of light.

### **Fine Flour For The Table Of Showbread (24:5-9)**

And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake.

And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD.

And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial even an offering made by fire unto the LORD [[Lev. 24:5-7](#)].

The fine flour was to be furnished by the people, as was the olive oil. As the oil speaks of the Holy Spirit, so the bread speaks of Christ. "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" ([John 6:35](#)).

Fine flour means it was of wheat. The frankincense was a natural gum to be a gift from the people. The bread speaks of Christ, and the frankincense speaks of the wonderful fragrance of His humanity.

Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.

And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute [[Lev. 24:8-9](#)].

The bread would stay on the table for a week. It was to be changed on the Sabbath, and the old bread was to be eaten by Aaron and his sons -- and always in the Holy Place. When David and his men were in desperate need, Ahimelech gave him some of the

showbread to eat ([1Sam. 21:4-6](#)). Our Lord calls attention to this when they criticized His disciples for eating grain on the Sabbath Day ([Matt. 12:3-4](#)).

The bread and the light speak of Christ. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" ([John 6:51](#)). "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" ([John 8:12](#)).

We must feed on Him if we are to serve Him. And anything we do for Him must be done in His light through the Holy Spirit.

### **Death Penalty For The Sin Of Blasphemy (24:10-23)**

There are only two incidents or episodes recorded in the Book of Leviticus. One is the incident of Nadab and Abihu back in [Leviticus 10](#), and now we come to this incident. It seems entirely out of keeping with the instructions given here, but we need to recognize the fact that God is teaching a great lesson concerning blasphemy.

And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp;

And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:)

And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them [[Lev. 24:10-12](#)].

This boy who did the blaspheming is of a mixed race -- his mother was of the tribe of Dan and his father was an Egyptian. There was a mixed multitude that went out of Egypt along with the children of Israel ([Exod. 12:38](#)). We are going to see that this group started trouble in the camp; they would murmur and cause strife. "And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a-lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?" ([Num. 11:4](#)).

We can see why these would be problem children, troublemakers. When the day came for the children of Israel to leave the land of Egypt and go out into the Promised Land, the Egyptian father would stay in Egypt and the Israelitish mother would go. There is a separation right there.

This is one of the reasons that God told His people then (and He tells us now) that there should not be intermarriage between a believer and an unbeliever. This does not have anything to do with race. It is wrong for a believer to marry an unbeliever regardless of the color of the skin. Even though both are the same color, it is still wrong for a believer to marry an unbeliever. God says that. I would never have known it is wrong if God hadn't said it.

This boy has a problem. He must make a decision whether to go the way of the father or the way of the mother. The problem is that the decision is never really made. Sure, he made an initial decision, but then in his mind the question would always reappear, I wonder if I should have done the other thing and stayed with Dad. This mixed multitude has an eternal question mark before them. It was a hard decision to leave Egypt in the first place. Then their thoughts constantly go back to Egypt, and when the going gets rough, they are the first to complain.

Now, friends, we have those same people in the church today. There is the unsaved person in the church who wants one foot in the church, but he has the other foot out in the world. They are the troublemakers. It has always made me wonder whether the troublemaker is really a saved person. I cannot understand a really born-again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ trying to block the giving out of the Word of God. The greatest opposition I have had to my radio broadcast that gives out the Word of God has not come from those outside the church; it has been the church members who have tried to wreck this radio program. I was never so shocked in my life. One would expect them to say, "Brother, God bless you. I hope you can get the Word of God out to people." No, my friend, they didn't want to have any part in it.

Now this boy got into a fight. We can easily understand how that could come about. He did not have a place in the tribe of Dan, but was a hanger-on who had access to the camp of Israel. After he got into the fight, he blasphemed the name of God. He cursed the name of the Lord, that name which was so sacred in Israel that it was not even voiced. It evidently was the Hebrew tetragrammaton YHWH. There is even a question today about how to pronounce the name of the Lord. Is it Jehovah or Jahweh? The name is so holy that the Israelites did not even pronounce it, but this blasphemer could pronounce it!

I was invited to a private club by one of the members, and we had lunch there. A man at the table next to us used the name of God more than I have ever used it in any sermon. But He didn't use it like I use it in a sermon! He was blaspheming. And God feels no differently about him than He did about this boy in Leviticus.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him.

And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying,  
Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin.

And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death [[Lev. 24:13-16](#)].

God handed down His verdict of guilty, and the penalty was death by stoning. The seriousness of the crime is measured by the penalty which God inflicted. All who heard the blasphemy must place their hands on his head, denoting a placing of guilt solely on

the young man. The death penalty is required for blaspheming God, and it is established that the penalty shall be paid by both the Israelite and the stranger.

And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.

And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast.

And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him;

Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again.

And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.

Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the LORD your God [[Lev. 24:17-22](#)].

We have developed some soft notions. The penalty for murdering a man is stated right here. War protesters like to print "Thou shalt not kill" on their banners. I am still waiting to see a banner that says "He that killeth any man shall surely be put to death."

There was established here what is known as lex talionis, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. This was the penalty which was inflicted literally. One law applied to both the Israelite and the stranger.

And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses [[Lev. 24:23](#)].

There is a great moral lesson here. The name of our God is sacred and must be protected. Blasphemy is a crime of the deepest hue. Also, human life is sacred and must be protected. God provides also for the protection of personal property.

God is righteous in all His dealings. We, too, are guilty before God -- "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But Christ has borne our sentence of death. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" ([Isa. 53:4-6](#)).

## Chapter 25

**THEME:** The sabbatical year; the year of Jubilee; the redemption of property; the redemption of persons

Not only was the Mosaic economy directed to the people of Israel, but it also pertained particularly to the land of Palestine. This is emphasized in this chapter. The laws given here could not be enforced until Israel entered the land of Canaan. They could not

possibly be adapted to the wilderness. There is a constant and almost monotonous reference to and repetition of the word land -- "When ye come into the land," "rest unto the land," and "proclaim liberty throughout all the land." That last phrase is found ten times. Everything in this chapter is tied down to the land which God gave Israel. The Mosaic economy was directed to a peculiar people, Israel, and to a particular land, Palestine. Furthermore, it is directed to a people engaged in agriculture.

There are those who try to saddle the Old Testament Law as a way of life upon the church. These laws don't fit in California, and they won't fit other areas of our nation. "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land" is inscribed on our Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. Yet, we need always remember that these laws were given to a particular people in a particular land.

One cannot read Leviticus, nor the rest of the Bible, without noticing the recurrence of the number seven. It is the number used to denote completeness. It does not mean perfection in every instance, but it denotes completeness. There is a definite connection of the many occurrences of the number seven in Leviticus with the number seven in Revelation. Both books use it in a structural way. Time was divided into sevens both for the civil and ceremonial calendars. There is the seventh day, the seventh week, the seventh month, the seventh year. The calendar was geared to Sabbath times and the Levitical code was run on wheels of seven cycles. This occurs again in Revelation.

God rested on the seventh day, not because He was tired, but because He had completed creation in six days, and there was no more to do. The Sabbath was made the basic unit of measurement of time, and then from the Sabbath there were ever-expanding units of time measurement.

### **The Sabbatical Year (25:1-7)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying [[Lev. 25:1](#)].

It should be noted that this reverts back to Mount Sinai, but it is to be put into effect when they get into the Land. Remember that God spoke out of the tabernacle in [Leviticus 1:1](#).

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD [[Lev. 25:2](#)].

This is amazing. There is a sabbath for the land as well as for man. The seventh day is for man, and the seventh year is for the land.

The seventh day hearkens back to creation when God rested from His labors, for His work of creation was complete. Sabbath means rest, and in its ultimate meaning it refers to the rest of redemption. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" ([Heb. 4:9-11](#)). Rest in these verses means literally "keeping of a sabbath."

It is obvious in this day of scientific agriculture that letting the land lie fallow on the seventh year was good for the land. It was also a rest for those who tilled the soil,

although they could discharge other necessary duties. This Sabbatical year for the land was to deliver the Israelite from covetousness. Actually, it was the breaking of this regulation concerning the Sabbatical year that sent Israel into the seventy years Babylonian captivity ([2Chron. 36:21](#)). They failed to keep seventy Sabbatic years over a period of 490 years; so they went into captivity for seventy years.

**Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;**

**But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard [[Lev. 25:3-4](#)].**

This makes it perfectly clear that the Sabbatical year related to the land. They were to sow their fields and prune their vineyards for six years, and then neither sow nor prune on the seventh year. There is a curse upon the earth as well as upon man, and it is by the sweat of man's brow that he extracts bread from the soil. There will be a day when the curse shall be lifted from creation ([Rom. 8:20-22](#) and [Isa. 35:1-2](#)).

The southland where I was reared has learned, to its sorrow, that one should let the land lie fallow. A great deal of the land has been worn out by planting cotton every year, year after year. The Sabbatical year was actually a good agricultural principle which God gave to them. It is quite interesting that God knows all about farming, isn't it?

**That which growtheth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.**

**And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee,**

**And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat [[Lev. 25:5-7](#)].**

This shows how the physical needs of the people were supplied during the Sabbatical year. The land was so productive that it was not necessary to plant each year. In the Euphrates Valley, in the days of Abraham, it was not necessary to plant at all. The grain grew without planting. The ground in Israel produced enough to supply the needs of the owner, his servants, and the stranger. Even the cattle could survive and probably grew fat by grazing on the untilled land. God took care of both man and beast, Israelite and stranger, rich and poor during the year of rest. They were all given enough to eat. However, they could not harvest anything to market it.

Years ago, before all the subdivisions were built, there were many fine vineyards near Pasadena. I had a very fine neighbor who had a wonderful vineyard of Concord grapes. He was a generous man and he would always bring me a basket or two during the season. He was a Seventh Day Adventist and at times he would try to goad me about the Sabbath Day. He would ask me why I didn't keep the Sabbath Day. I would tell him that I did keep the Sabbath Day -- on Saturday and on Sunday and on Monday and on Tuesday and every day of the week. I tried to explain to him that sabbath means rest and that we have

entered into the rest of redemption. We have ceased from works and put our trust in Jesus Christ which makes every day a day of rest, a rest in Jesus Christ. Of course, he didn't like it that way. Then I would ask him a question. "Are you keeping the Mosaic Law? Are you keeping the Sabbath as they did in Israel?" He assured me that he was. Then I showed him chapter 25 of Leviticus. I told him there was not a Sabbath Day only, but there was also a Sabbatical year. In that year the poor people could go into the vineyard and glean grapes. I asked him to let me know when he would observe that Sabbatical year so I could get my basket and glean some of his grapes. He answered, "You'd better not go into that vineyard without my permission!" May I say to you, he was not keeping the Mosaic Law. He was keeping only a small part of it. He did not keep the Sabbatical year nor the year of Jubilee.

God was teaching Israel several lessons. He never permitted any one of them to monopolize the land so that the poor people were not taken care of. God was protecting the land and the poor people at the same time. Also He was teaching them that the land was cursed but that the time would come when the land would produce in abundance.

Today, people worry about the population explosion and the inability of the earth to produce enough food for the people. When the curse is removed, my friend, this earth will produce in a way never seen since the fall of man. God is the supplier of all human needs. God is the owner of this earth.

### **The Year Of Jubilee (25:8-24)**

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years [[Lev. 25:8](#)].

This continues in the multiples of seven. Seven Sabbatical years were numbered and this made forty-nine years. Then, the following year, the fiftieth, was set aside as the year of Jubilee. The year of Jubilee was a continuing of the number seven to the ever-ascending scale of the calendar. It was the largest unit of time -- fifty years.

Today we operate by leases. People may have a fifty-year lease or a ninety-nine-year lease. God worked on that basis, also. There were two years of Jubilee in every century.

Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land [[Lev. 25:9](#)].

This was the crowning point of the entire sabbatical structure of the nation. It was the SHeNATH HAYOBHEL, the year of Jubilee. In many respects it was the most anticipated and joyful period of the Mosaic economy. The KEREN HAYOBHEL meant the horn of a ram, and in the time the YOBHEL came to mean trumpet. It is translated twenty-one times as "jubilee," five times as "ram's horn," and once as "trumpet."

After Israel was settled in the land, it is difficult to see how one blast of the trumpet could be heard from Dan to Beersheba. It is reasonable to conclude that in every populated area there was a simultaneous blowing of the ram's horn to usher in the year of Jubilee. I think it would begin at the tabernacle or temple. There would be a person stationed far enough

away to be able to hear it, and then the trumpet note would be passed on and on out to the very end of the land.

**And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family [Lev. 25:10].**

In that day people could mortgage their land, but in the year of Jubilee that land would return back to the original owner. This was the way God protected the land from leaving the original owner. The land could be taken away for a period of fifty years, but in the year of Jubilee the land went back to the original owner or to his descendants.

If a man had sold himself into slavery, when that trumpet was sounded he went free. The shackles were broken.

This is how we are freed today. The Greek word for trumpet is kerux and the verb kerusso means to proclaim or to herald. The year of Jubilee is likened to this age of grace when the gospel is preached to slaves of sin and captives of Satan. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" ([Rom. 6:17-18, 23](#)). The Lord Jesus Christ said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" ([John 8:32, 36](#)).

In the year of Jubilee everything went free. All mortgages were canceled. When you come to Jesus Christ, my friend, the sin question is settled. He paid the penalty. It is all settled, and you go free. He makes you free! "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" ([Rom. 6:22](#)). "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" ([Gal. 5:1](#)).

In this connection it is interesting to note the words of our Lord in the synagogue at Nazareth: "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" ([Luke 4:17-21](#)).

"To preach the gospel to the poor" is to herald it, to trumpet it. Isn't this the year of Jubilee -- to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, to set at liberty them that are bruised?

Possibly the best application and final fulfillment of the year of Jubilee will be in the Millennium as it relates directly to the nation Israel. I would encourage you to read [Isaiah 11, 35, 40](#), [Jeremiah 23](#), [Micah 4](#), and [Revelation 20](#).

A jubile, shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which growtheth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.

For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field [[Lev. 25:11-12](#)].

The year of Jubilee followed a Sabbatical year when the land lay fallow. God promised to provide providentially for them. They were to obey. God would provide.

In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession.

And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another:

According to the number of years after the jubile thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee:

According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.

Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God.

Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.

And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.

And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:

Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.

And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.

The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land [[Lev. 25:13-24](#)].

This section explains that all property and possessions were to be returned to the original owner. This prevented any one individual or group from getting possession of most of the land while the rest became extremely poor. It preserved a balance in Israel. This was not a choice between communism and capitalism, but it was God's plan. He retained ownership of the land and Israel held it in perpetuity.

God promised His blessing upon them. He promised to bless the land in the sixth year. They would sow again on the eighth year and they would eat of the old fruit of the land until the ninth year when it would produce again. God makes it very clear to them in [verse 23](#): "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine."

### **The Redemption Of Property (25:25-34)**

If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possessions, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.

And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it;

Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession [[Lev. 25:25-27](#)].

It was a long time from one year of Jubilee to the next. If a man lost his property shortly after a Jubilee, there was the possibility he would not be alive to enjoy it the next time a year of Jubilee came around. So God made another provision for the recovery of the land. If there was a rich relative, he was able to redeem the property if he was willing to do so, and then the land could be restored to the original owner. It depended on the willingness of the kinsman. This is the law of the kinsman-redeemer which we will see in operation in the Book of Ruth.

But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubile: and in the jubile it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.

And if a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year may he redeem it.

And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubile.

But the houses of the villages which have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields of the country: they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubile.

Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites, and the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time.

And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession, shall go out in the year of jubile: for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel.

But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it is their perpetual possession [[Lev. 25:28-34](#)].

Laws were also made concerning dwellings and buildings on property. Depreciation was taken into consideration. There were different rules applying to the Levites.

### **The Redemption Of Persons (25:35-55)**

And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase [[Lev. 25:35-37](#)].

God was explicit about the care of unfortunate folk. They were to be helped; they were not to be taken advantage of.

I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.

And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:

But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile:

And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.

For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondsmen.

Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God.

Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.

Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.

And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour [[Lev. 25:38-46](#)].

The poor brother who probably had a low I.Q. was to be protected from becoming a slave. He was to be treated as a hired servant, not as a slave. They were permitted to have only foreigners as slaves -- which was a great step forward in a world of slavery. It is the adaptation of the Mosaic Law to the mores of that day.

And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family:

After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him:

Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.

And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubile: and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of a hired servant shall it be with him.

If there be yet many years behind, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption out of the money that he was bought for.

And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubile, then he shall count with him, and according unto his years shall he give him again the price of his redemption.

And as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him: and the other shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight.

And if he be not redeemed in these years, then he shall go out in the year of jubile, both he, and his children with him.

For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God [[Lev. 25:47-55](#)].

This is the application of the law of Jubilee to the person (see [verse 10](#)) who not only had lost his property, but had to sell his person as well. He could have the services of a kinsman-redeemer if there was one who was willing and able to deliver him before the year of Jubilee.

You and I have a Kinsman-Redeemer. He is rich. Yet, for our sakes He was willing to become poor so that He might shed His precious blood to redeem us. He has redeemed not only our persons but He has also paid the price for this cursed earth. It too will be redeemed from the curse that is on it now. The law of the kinsman-redeemer points to our Lord Jesus Christ who is our Kinsman-Redeemer.

## Chapter 26

**THEME:** Prologue to Israel's Magna Carta of the land; promise of blessing; pronouncement of judgment; prediction predicated on promise to patriarchs

This is a marvelous chapter. It is a prophetic history that covers Israel's entire tenure of the Promised Land until the present hour and gives the conditions in the future on which they will occupy the land.

This section stands in a peculiar relationship to the remainder of the Book of Leviticus. There are not great spiritual lessons and pictures here, but this is the direct word of Jehovah to the nation Israel concerning their future. This is history prewritten and reveals the basis on which Israel entered the land of Canaan and their tenancy there.

This is an "iffy" chapter. "If" occurs nine times and it has to do with the conditions on which they occupy the land. God says "I will" twenty-four times. God will act and react according to their responses to the "if". God gave them the land, but their occupancy of it is determined by their answer to the "if". Obedience is the ground of blessing in the land. This chapter is not only the calendar of their history, but it serves as the barometer of their blessings. Their presence in the land, rainfall, and bountiful crops denote the favor of God. Their absence from the land, famine, and drought denote the judgment of God because of their disobedience.

You and I are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. However there are some "ifs" connected to that also. God loves you and wants to shower you with His blessings. But you can put up an umbrella of indifference, you can put up an umbrella of sin, you can put up an umbrella of stepping out of the will of God. When you do that, the sunshine of His love won't get through to you. You must put down your umbrella to experience His spiritual blessings.

### **Prologue To Israel's Magna Carta Of The Land (26:1-2)**

Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.

Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD [[Lev. 26:1-2](#)].

These two verses sum up the first part of the Ten Commandments, man's relationship with God. These are essential for Israel to maintain residence in the land. They are to meet these injunctions if they are to occupy that land. The land is given to them, but their enjoyment of it, their occupation of it, depends upon their obedience to God.

(1) They are to make no idols.

The Hebrew word for an idol (elilim) means a "nothing." They shall make no nothings. It's pretty hard to make a nothing, friends, and yet there are a great many folk who make a nothing of their relationship to God. Anything that takes the place of God is a nothing.

The word given for graven images means a carved wooden image. And the word for the image of stone means sculptured stone idols. The people were not to worship an image, nor even worship before an image. This is a repetition of what had already been told the people back in [Leviticus 19:30](#).

(2) Keep the Sabbaths.

(3) Reverence the Sanctuary.

The Sabbath, the Sanctuary, and this matter of worshiping God, all come in one package. The character of Jehovah is the basis for obeying these injunctions. "I am the Lord."

## Promise Of Blessing (26:3-13)

If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;

Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land [[Lev. 26:3-6](#)].

You notice this starts with an "if". If they walk in the prescribed manner, then God promised these things. Their occupancy of the land is contingent upon the obedience to God's revealed will to them. God recognizes their free will. If you will obey, then God will bless.

It seems that in that land the primary evidence of the blessing of God in response to their obedience is rainfall. We find this repeated in Deuteronomy and in the prophets. "And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD . . ." ([Ezek. 34:26-27](#)).

The prophets look forward to the day when this will be accomplished in Israel. It is a day yet to come. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt" ([Amos 9:13](#)). "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil" ([Joel 2:23-24](#)).

God's promise to them is the occupation of that land, showers, fruitfulness, peace. It's interesting that the little nation can't have peace today. It's no use for us to point our finger at them because the rest of us can't have peace either. It's all tied up in one little word "if". God has promised to bless if certain things are done.

And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.

And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword [[Lev. 26:7-8](#)].

Victory over their enemies would be a part of their blessing. Many times this was literally fulfilled, as you know. When they would return to God, God would raise up a Samuel, a David, a Deborah, a Gideon, or an Elijah. All these were raised up because God was making good His promise. They would be victorious over their enemies as part of their

blessing. "One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you" ([Josh. 23:10](#)).

For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new [[Lev. 26:9-10](#)].

A population explosion in Israel would be part of the blessing. Today the world doesn't think that is a blessing at all. The increase in the population would not present the problem of food shortage because the food would be so multiplied that they would have to remove the old to make room for the new.

And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you [[Lev. 26:11](#)].

Don't tell me that God does not abhor sin. Of course He does. And He will not compromise with it in your life or my life. The tabernacle in their midst was an evident token of blessing. This is the great hope of the future which will be fulfilled finally for the eternal earth.

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" ([Rev. 21:3](#)).

And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people [[Lev. 26:12](#)].

God promises to fellowship with those who obey Him. That is also what He tells us today. ". . . if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1John 1:7](#)). God wants to have fellowship with us. "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" ([2Cor. 6:16](#)).

I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you upright [[Lev. 26:13](#)].

The future promise of blessing rests upon the solid history of the past when God delivered them from Egypt. He is saying to them, "I have done this for you in the past; don't you know I will do it for you in the future?" He tells us the same thing today. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" ([Phil. 1:6](#)). You can be confident that since He has brought you up to this moment, He is going to lead you right through to the day of Jesus Christ. I'll say a Hallelujah to that!

## **Pronouncement Of Judgment (26:14-39)**

But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;

And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant [[Lev. 26:14-15](#)].

Listen to His three "ifs" in these two verses. These are the "ifs" of a breach of the covenant: refusal to hear, refusal to do, despising and abhorring God's statutes and judgments. Breaking God's covenant would bring judgment upon the people and the land.

I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart; and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you [[Lev. 26:16-17](#)].

This is the first degree judgment -- terror, consumption, burning ague, sorrow of heart, and crop failure. Their enemies will slay them, enslave them, and cause them great fear. This happened often in their sad and sordid history. We read that the anger of the Lord waxed hot against Israel, and He delivered them into the hands of spoilers who spoiled them (Jud. 2:14; Jud. 3:8; Jud. 4:2).

What the prophets did in their messages was call their attention to the fact that they had broken the covenant which God had made with them. "And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat . . ." ([Jer. 5:17](#)). "Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine" ([Mic. 6:15](#)).

And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:

And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits [[Lev. 26:18-20](#)].

This is the second degree of judgment. If they were obdurate and continual in their disobedience, then God would judge them seven times, which indicates a complete and absolute judgment. Their pride would be broken. There would be no rain; there would be continual crop failure.

And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.

I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate [[Lev. 26:21-22](#)].

This is the third degree judgment. Plagues and wild beasts will decimate the population. All of this came upon them. Read in Judges where they traveled on the byways while the highways were unoccupied. Man has lost his dominion over nature.

And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;

Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat and not be satisfied [[Lev. 26:23-26](#)].

This is the fourth degree judgment. Notice the repetition of the number seven, which indicates completeness. The enemy will breach their defenses, and the pestilence will strike the people. Captivity would be the end result.

Ezekiel warned them that a third part would die of the pestilence and with famine, a third part would be scattered ([Ezek. 5:12](#)). Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all warned them of famine which would overtake them. It all happened.

This will take place again at the time of the Great Tribulation, as we find it in the sixth chapter of the Book of Revelation.

And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;

Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat [[Lev. 26:27-29](#)].

This seems terribly harsh, and one would think it could never come to pass. But it did.

And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcases upon the carcases of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.

And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.

And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.

And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste [[Lev. 26:30-33](#)].

This is the fifth degree judgment, and it is extreme. It was the result of warfare in the siege of the cities. This was fulfilled in the siege of Samaria ([2Kings 6:28-29](#)), and again in the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar ([Lam. 2:20](#); [Lam. 4:10](#)), and again when Titus the Roman attacked Jerusalem in B.C. 70. Verse 33 is a picture of the land as it stood for 1900 years. God does what He says He will do.

Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.

As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it [[Lev. 26:34-35](#)].

Here is the reason they went into the Babylonian captivity. During 490 years Israel failed to give the land its Sabbaths. That means the land missed seventy Sabbath years. The people of Israel thought they were getting by with it, but finally God said it was enough. If they wouldn't give the land its Sabbaths, God would. So He put them out of the land for seventy years. How accurate God is! This is why the Babylonian captivity lasted seventy years ([2Chron. 36:21](#)).

And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.

And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.

And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.

And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them [[Lev. 26:36-39](#)].

This is an accurate prophetic portrayal of the Jew since the days of the Babylonian captivity, as he has been scattered among the nations. Wave after wave of anti-Semitism has descended upon him to destroy him. This section is a striking picture of the Nazi anti-Semitic movement. You can see that this Book of Leviticus is up-to-date.

### **Prediction Predicated On Promise To Patriarchs (26:40-46)**

If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:

Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land [[Lev. 26:40-42](#)].

All of their past iniquity does not destroy the fact that Israel holds the title deed to that land. This is a remarkable prophecy and one that God says He will fulfill when the time has come. God will not utterly destroy them because of His covenant with Abraham and other patriarchs. We found in the Book of Exodus that when Israel was in slavery in Egypt, God heard their groaning, God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and so God delivered them out of Egypt ([Exod. 2:24-25](#)).

Now God tells them they can stay in the land if they will obey Him. If not, they must leave the land. But if they will repent and turn to God when they are out of the land, then He will bring them back into the land. So we find that Daniel turned to God in prayer when he was down in Babylon. He turned his face toward Jerusalem, he confessed his sins and the sins of his people, and when he did that, God heard. God sent a messenger to him to tell him they would return to the land. And they did return back to the land!

God still has a future purpose for the nation which the judgment of the past cannot nullify. Read [Romans 11:1-25](#) and [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#) in this connection.

The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.

And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God [[Lev. 26:43-44](#)].

This is a remarkable passage of Scripture. Can you say that God is through with the nation Israel after you have read this passage? If you believe that God means what He says, then He is not through with them at all.

But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.

These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses [[Lev. 26:45-46](#)].

They brought judgment upon Palestine just as Adam brought judgment upon the whole earth by his sin. Because of God's covenant with their fathers, He will return them to the land and restore all that He had promised to them.

We have come to the end of the giving of these laws here in Leviticus. God confirms the Pentateuch here as given through Moses. This verse seems to end the book, but it doesn't.

God looks down through the ages to their repeated failures and His faithfulness and final victory. Moses could not bring them eternal blessings, although he was a mediator. The

world must look to Another. John gives us the answer: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" ([John 1:17](#)).

## Chapter 27

**THEME:** Commutation of vows concerning persons; commutation of vows concerning animals; commutation of vows concerning houses; commutation of vows concerning land; concerning three things which are the Lord's apart from a vow

When you begin to read this chapter, you wonder why it is here. It seems to be an addendum or a postscript to the Book of Leviticus. All the expositors note this, and some actually consider this a major problem of the book. J. A. Seiss doesn't include it with the Book of Leviticus, and Dr. Langley treats it as an appendix. Although the subject matter seems to be extraneous and unrelated to the contents of the book, I see no reason to make a mountain out of a molehill.

I think there is a definite purpose in placing this chapter last. Dr. S. H. Kellogg notes with real spiritual perception that what has preceded this chapter is obligatory, while this is voluntary. Actually, this makes a beautiful and fitting climax to the book of worship.

In much this same way, chapter 21 of John's Gospel follows the climax of chapter 20. In chapter 20 the risen Lord has revealed Himself to His disciples and has sent them out into the world. But wait a minute -- He has a message to Simon Peter in chapter 21, "If you love me, feed my sheep." It is voluntary, and the basis for it is love. That is God's method.

A striking feature about the vows is that they are voluntary. They follow the commandments, ceremonies, and ordinances. It is going the second mile after God has required the first mile. They are the response of a grateful heart. However, it is important to note that after a promise has been made to God, it is essential that it be fulfilled.

The natural response of a saved person is to ask what he can do for the Lord since the Lord has done so much for him. We find this expressed many times in the Scripture. "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?" ([Ps. 116:12](#)). The apostle Paul wrote to the believers of his day, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" ([Rom. 12:1](#)). This is not a command. He says, "I beseech you." In [Titus 2:11](#) he wrote, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." What does it do? Does it demand something? No. "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" ([Titus 2:12](#)). Micah evidently had this chapter in mind when he wrote, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" ([Mic. 6:8](#)).

Every normal believer wants to do something for God. He wants to pledge something to God. The deepest problem is to find something worthy to pledge to God. Ephraim Syrus wrote, "I pronounce my life wretched, because it is unprofitable." David Brainerd cried, "O that my soul were holy as He is holy! O that it were pure as Christ is pure, and perfect

as my Father in Heaven is perfect! These are the sweetest commands in God's book, comprising all others. And shall I break them? Must I break them? Am I under a necessity of it as long as I live in the world? O my soul! woe, woe is me that I am a sinner." What can a saved sinner offer to God? This chapter answers that question.

Once a vow was made, it became mandatory. "It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry" ([Prov. 20:25](#)). You make the inquiry first so you know what you are doing. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?" ([Eccl. 5:4-6](#)).

There were promissory vows and there were vows of renunciation. These vows figured large in the life of the nation. Then there was the Nazarite vow which is given in detail in [Numbers 6](#). The most notable vow is the one made by Jephthah. "And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering" ([Judg. 11:30-31](#)). We know that God strictly forbade human sacrifice. I believe the original can also be translated, ". . . when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, or I will offer up a burnt offering." Remember that it was his daughter who ran out to greet him. He did not sacrifice his daughter, but he did offer her up to the Lord. This is made clear in [Judges 11:39-40](#): "And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel, that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year." In other words, she did not marry. For a Hebrew woman, this was a terrible thing. She was dedicated wholly to the Lord. Jephthah offered her to the Lord, but he did not sacrifice her by killing her.

It was a rash vow that he had made, but at least he kept it. If a vow was not kept, a trespass and sin offering must be made ([Lev. 5:4-6](#)).

I believe that God will hold you to your vow. A great many Christians today are not keeping their vows to God. If you do not intend to keep a vow, or you think lightly about your dealing with God, then you had better take a second look at it. I think that there are many Christians who have been set aside today. There are many who are being judged and many who have fallen asleep as Paul says. Remember, God is not asking you to make a vow. It is voluntary. But if you do promise God something, be sure you go through with it. "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou has vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth" ([Deut. 23:21-23](#)).

### **Commutation Of Vows Concerning Persons (27:1-8)**

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the LORD by thy estimation [[Lev. 27:1-2](#)].

"Making a singular vow," means to single out something of value, particularly precious to the individual. Remember how David would not offer to God something which had been donated to him. ". . . Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing . . ." ([2Sam. 24:24](#)).

If you are in a church and you are attempting to give to God some offering that costs you nothing, may God have mercy on you! We are not under a tithe system today. Israel was, but we are not. God does not require a tithe of us. We are to give a freewill offering. I can promise you that if you are cheap with God, God will be cheap with you.

A successful business man was asked the secret of his success. He said, "As the Lord shovels it in, I shovel it out; the more I shovel it out, the more the Lord shovels it in." Now, that is not to say that the Lord is promising to bless us with money. He has many kinds of blessings for us. However, I do believe that some of us are poor today and some of us have such a hard time financially because of the way we deal with God.

A man came to me when the stock market crashed, and he brought in some stock which he offered with this comment, "Now that it is going down, I might just as well give it to the church." God have mercy on that kind of giving. We are to give something of value. It should cost us something.

And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels [[Lev. 27:3-4](#)].

When a person was dedicated by a vow to God, it did not mean that individual must serve in the tabernacle -- that was the peculiar service of the Levites. A redemption price could be paid for the person which would relieve him of that service. This is called the commutation price of the person.

A man between the ages of twenty and sixty was of greater value because of the amount of work he could do. The labor value seemed to be the standard of evaluation. A male in the prime of life could render the most service. "By thy estimation" meant that which was the current value among the people.

The labor value of a female would be less, but the important feature is that a female could be devoted to God. I think this makes it clear that the daughter of Jephthah was not offered as a human sacrifice but remained unmarried and was vowed to God.

Hannah brought little Samuel to the temple as a thanksgiving offering to God in payment of her vow. She said, "For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD . . ." ([1Sam. 1:27-28](#)). She kept her vow.

Have you ever come to God and presented yourself to Him? Have you presented your children to God? Your grandchildren? Have you presented your possessions to Him? He hasn't commanded you to do that, but He has said that you may do it. If you do it, then it is mandatory that you make good.

And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver.

And if it be from sixty years old and above; if it be a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him [[Lev. 27:5-8](#)].

You see that the scale of values was determined by age and not by social position, riches, or prestige. The value was based on the ability to labor. Notice how wonderfully God provided for the poor so they could participate in this voluntary service. A fair and equitable price was set by the priest according to the man's ability to pay. The widow's mite is of more value in heaven than the rich gifts of the wealthy and affluent.

There is another striking feature about the vowing of persons. Ordinarily in human affairs, a man pays for the service of another. In the law of vows this is reversed and a man pays to serve God. It is a privilege to serve God.

### **Commutation Of Vows Concerning Animals (27:9-13)**

And if it be a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD, all that any man giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy.

He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy [[Lev. 27:9-10](#)].

When I was pastor of a little country church, a member of the church took me out to his barn lot and showed me a calf. He told me he had given it to the LORD. To tell you the truth, that calf didn't look as if it would live, and I suspect that is the reason he gave it to the Lord. Well, that calf became a blue-ribbon prize winner! Then the man told me, "You know, this is such a fine animal that I thought I'd better keep it. I have another animal over here that I'm giving to the Lord instead." He sold it and gave the money to the church, and felt very comfortable about what he had done.

God says, "Don't substitute." If you have promised to do something for God, go through with it. Remember the sin of Ananias and Sapphira. They said they were giving to the Lord the entire price of a piece of land, but they didn't go through with it. They didn't have to give all of it to God. Peter told them that while it was theirs, they were perfectly

free to do with it what they wished. It was a voluntary offering, but then they tried to withhold some of it from God.

This that we are talking about is real today. God holds us to our vows. If you have promised Him something and haven't made good, it is still on His books. We are dealing with a God of reality.

**And if it be any unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the LORD then he shall present the beast before the priest:**

**And the priest shall value it, whether it be good or bad: as thou valuest it, who art the priest, so shall it be.**

**But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation [[Lev. 27:11-13](#)].**

An unclean animal could be pledged in a vow, but it would not be offered in sacrifice. The priest would value the animal, the man would pay the price of redemption and add a fifth of the price as a sort of fine for offering an unclean animal.

### **Commutation Of Vows Concerning Houses (27:14-15)**

**And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the LORD, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad; as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.**

**And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his [[Lev. 27:14-15](#)].**

The home of a man is his most sacred material possession. He could pledge it to the Lord. I think a Christian home, as well as the children of Christians, should be dedicated to God. The man could continue to live in his house and begin paying rent to God as the owner. If he did not continue paying his rent, he was to add a fifth when he redeemed it. Again this was a sort of fine in recognition of God's ownership.

A man asked me to come out to dedicate his house. He said he wanted it to be God's house, and I could come out there any time I wanted to. Well, I had a house of my own and didn't need to be running out to his house. If he really meant that it was God's house, then he should pay God rent for it as a recognition of God's ownership. You may ask me whether I think this is that literal. Yes, I think it is just that literal. We make vows to God of our freewill. Then we prove whether or not we are genuine in our vows. This gets right down to the nitty-gritty where you and I live.

### **Commutation Of Vows Concerning Land (27:16-25)**

**And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.**

**If he sanctify his field from the year of jubile, according to thy estimation it shall stand.**

But if he sanctify his field after the jubile, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubile, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.

And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.

And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more.

But the field, when it goeth out in the jubile, shall be holy unto the LORD, as a field devoted; the possession thereof shall be the priest's.

And if a man sanctify unto the LORD a field which he hath bought, which is not of the fields of his possession;

Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation, even unto the year of the jubile: and he shall give thine estimation in that day, as a holy thing unto the LORD.

In the year of the jubile the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought, even to him to whom the possession of the land did belong.

And all thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel [[Lev. 27:16-25](#)].

This must have been a very complicated system. Land could be dedicated to God even though the land belonged to God. The land was evaluated on the basis of its productivity and in relation to the year of Jubilee. All land returned to the original owner at that time. This was taken into account if a man dedicated the land to the Lord just shortly before the year of Jubilee as a gesture of generosity. In fact he might be a very selfish man. A man could not dedicate a borrowed field to God. God knows the heart of man.

### **Concerning Three Things Which Are The Lord's Apart From A Vow (27:26-34)**

Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the LORD's firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether it be ox, or sheep: it is the LORD's.

And if it be of an unclean beast, then he shall redeem it according to thine estimation, and shall add a fifth part of it thereto: or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy estimation [[Lev. 27:26-27](#)].

The firstborn of both man and beast were already claimed by the Lord and could not be devoted to the Lord in a vow. God insisted that His rights be observed.

Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the LORD of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the

field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the LORD.

None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death [[Lev. 27:28-29](#)].

The second classification of things which could not be devoted in a vow was that which was already pledged in a vow to God. In Joshua we learn that Jericho was devoted to God for destruction. Because Achan took of that which God had told them they should utterly destroy, Achan was destroyed ([Josh. 6](#) and [Josh. 7](#)).

And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD.

And if a man will at all redeem aught of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.

And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed [[Lev. 27:30-33](#)].

The tithe was the third thing which already belonged to God and could not be pledged in a vow.

These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai [[Lev. 27:34](#)].

This verse concludes the Book of Leviticus and sums it up. It also reveals that chapter 27 is not an addendum but part and parcel of the thinking of God for man under law.

The believer can be thankful for the grace of God in this day. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" ([Titus 2:11-14](#)).

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(Recommended for Further Study)

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